230

ANASTASIUS.

230

ANASTASIUS,

OR,

MEMOIRS OF A GREEK;

WRITTEN AT THE CLOSE OF

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

THIRD EDITION.

MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASVATI MAHAL ... THE TANJORE

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.
1820.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S
230

ANASTASIUS,

OR

MEMOIRS OF A GREEK.

CHAPTER I.

HAD my fancy for trade continued in full force, Smyrna was the place in which to gratify that taste to the utmost of my faculties. In that trucking, trafficking city people's ideas run upon nothing but merchandise: their discourse only varies between the exchanges and the markets: their heads are full of figs and raisins, and their whole hearts wrapped up in cotton and broad cloths: they suppose man created for nothing but to buy and sell; and whoever makes not these occupations the sole business of his life, seems to them to neglect the end of his existence. I verily believe that they marry for no other purpose but to keep up the race of merchants and bankers.

But that unbounded indulgence in the luxuries of commerce was rather calculated to give a man of my variable appetite a surfeit of its sweets. Full two months had now elapsed since I first launched into the commercial line,—a circumstance sufficient in itself to diminish my enthusiasm for its charms; and in the course of those two months a single fortunate speculation had rendered me independent of its drudgery. I therefore slackened in my ardor, began to lose the good opinion of the Smyrniotes, and, reciprocating their abated regard, resolved again to return to Stambool; there to become, if possible, a Pasha for my money. The plan indeed might not be quite consistent with my recent solemn renunciation of all ambitious schemes, when yet fresh from seeing their dismal end in Valachia; but—when was I consistent; or when was not the wish to rise, the ruling passion of my soul?

My last mercantile transaction at Smyrna consisted in buying of Isaac-Bey a pair of pistols, made for use in England, and rendered ornamental in Turkey. They were destined for Hadjee Bollad-Ogloo, chief of the mighty house of Kara-Osmân, lords paramount of a great part of Anadoly. I had long purposed visiting this venerable old Aga, (for notwithstanding his real power, his nominal rank rose no higher) at Magnesia his residence; and now, in my way to the capital, put the often abandoned scheme in execution.

When presented to the chief, in his thriving residence; "Accept these arms," said I, "as the homage of a grateful traveller, who has found them useless amid the security which you have established in your wide domain."

Hadjee-Bollad received my offering, not with the contemptuous indifference of a Constantinopolitan upstart, afraid lest the smallest symptom of admiration should be construed into an acknowledgment of inferiority; but with the courteousness of one, whose ancestors for many generations back had stood high in the public estimation, as well as himself. He praised the beauty of the present, and appeared anxious to make an immediate trial of its excellence. "Age," said he, "has somewhat impaired my strength; but between this sort of weapon and my hand there has subsisted so long an acquaintance, that they often still seem to understand each other, almost without my participation."

He then, from his very seat, took aim across the wooden trellis of the window at a magpie, chattering on the top of a cypress tree in the court. To this bird had been given the name of Tchapan-Ogloo. It was that of another great territorial proprietor in Anadoly, the rival of the house of Kara-Osman in wealth, in power, and in extent of domain. He fired, exclaiming, "Fall, Tchapan-Ogloo!" and brought down the bird.

"I do not know," continued he, in great glee at

this achievement, "whether you think your present thrown away, but I am quite sure that the one here suing for your acceptance, cannot be better bestowed." This was a handsome horse, richly caparisoned, which Hadjee-Bollad desired me to keep, "in remembrance," he said, "of the patriarch of Magnesia."

Impatient to justify his compliment, I vaulted into the saddle, wrested a spear out of the hands of an attendant, and at full gallop hurled it deep into the trunk of the tree on which had sat the magpie.

"Well done!" cried the Aga. "Your race, I perceive, has resembled my own: with this difference, that you are just starting in the career, and that I am near its end. You may tell them so at Stambool: but lest their joy at hearing it be too extravagant, tell them too that the old stock leaves a few offsets—like yourself!"

I had intended to continue my journey the same evening: but, without pressing me to stay, the lord of Magnesia seemed to have contemplated my going away again so soon, as a thing so totally impossible, that I felt not resolution sufficient to take leave. I had not even an opportunity of representing the prolongation of my visit as a deviation from my original plan. To the Aga's hospitable disposition it would have appeared like owning a nefarious design.

Seeing me in admiration of the activity and bustle which prevailed throughout his residence;—of the

piles of cotton, the strings of camels, the goods loading and unloading, and the guides coming and going on every side: "this," said the Aga, "is only our peace establishment; but we are equally well equipped for war. At a day's notice we can bring into the field twenty thousand sturdy horsemen as well mounted as armed, for the defence of the empire—or for our own!"

"And with so much wealth," cried I, "and so much power, you have been able to avoid thus long the Sultan's dangerous honours?"

"It has cost us a little," hastily rejoined Hadjee. "We have paid greater sums to keep our heads out of the noose, than others do to thrust their necks into it: but simple Agas we came into the world, and simple Agas we are determined, God granting, to go out of it. Independence, and the right of leaving our vast domain, inherited from a long line of ancestors, to a long line of descendants, would be ill exchanged for the empty name of Visier, with servitude as the certain, and confiscation of the paternal estate, as the probable result." [1]

At this moment a steward advanced to inform Hadjee, that a troop of Albanians, fled from the oppression of some Roumiliote Pasha, were just come to crave his protection, and to beg some employment—or some waste land.

"Tell them," replied the Aga, "they shall have both." Then turning to me: "in granting such

requests," he added, "the giver is the gainer." I praised him for his liberality.

"Praise me for my sense," answered he, "in having discovered that my income bears more fruit in my tenants' hands than in my own coffers. You complimented me on the security of my roads. It was obtained, not by watching my subjects, but by giving them work. When people toil in mind and in body to improve their own property, they have not leisure to covet that of others."

For three days my ears feasted on Hadjee's wisdom, and my palate on his good fare: the dawn of the fourth ushered in the preparations for my departure. "I suppose," said my kind host, "that you only quit my residence for that of the younger branches of my family, at Bergamo [2] and at Yaya-keui." Without pledging myself to perform this more extensive circuit, I begged permission on my return from Stambool again to visit the chief himself. "Then do not tarry long," answered Hadjee: "I myself have a journey to perform, in which, old as I am, I may safely engage to outrun you, spite of all your activity." On this we took leave. I mounted my new horse, and departed.

But, though my person sped onward, my mind, as if wholly detached from its case of flesh and blood, continued stationary with Hadjee. It seemed riveted to the happy spot where the old Aga exercised his mild dominion; and all the way

to Constantinople, my thoughts still dwelt at Magnesia. There was in its to me novel scene—in that tranquil enjoyment of life's present sweets, first truly witnessed under Hadjee's friendly roof—an inexpressible charm. It left insipid, it almost converted into positive pain in the comparison, the pitiful half-tasted pleasures, snatched from fleeting time by the wretched victim to ambitious schemes:—schemes of which the labour is certain, the accomplishment doubtful, and the very success productive only of fruits too often insipid or bitter.

It was true, indeed, that many possessed not the means thus to saunter at leisure, like Hadjee-Aga, along paths strewed with roses. The greater number of mortals must first clear their way through tracts bristling with thorns and briars:—they must toil to support life, ere they could afford leisure for its enjoyment. I myself had experienced that condition: I myself had been obliged to labour hard for a competency; nay, had found all my hard labour of no avail to obtain it; and only an event wholly unlooked-for amid all my schemes, had at last given me that independence, so long pursued in vain.

But I finally possessed it: and I might now purchase every luxury of life, calculated to content the man exempt from ambition's maddening thirst:—I might now command every species of tangible gratification, save only that which consists in the power

of diffusing very extensive misery. Pleasant dwellings, a plenteous board, a handsome retinue of servants, a well assorted harem, and whatever else was of a nature directly to delight the sense, were things now within my easy reach; and the only circumstance still wanting to set them off to the greatest advantage, was the power of inflicting a certain quantity of starvation and torture, wherever the too bright sunshine of the picture might require the relief of deeper shadows;—the right to maintain a certain number of humbler instruments and witnesses of my pleasures, who should tremble at my frown, and turn pale when I spoke.

But, for the sake only of a few such additional relishes, was it worth my while again to risk the fortune already acquired, and to sacrifice the comforts already brought within my compass, when a thousand were at present the additional chances against my success in new schemes of aggrandisement; and a thousand more the hazards against the possession of the object sought, answering my expectations?

How often had I, in my various wanderings, from the mountain's highest apex espied some distant valley, which, thus indistinctly perceived, seemed to promise as soon as entered an end to all fatigue, and to my wearisome journey a concluding stage over a velvet turf;—but which, on a nearer ap-

proach, proved a sink of swamps and quagmires, a thousand times more irksome and vexatious than the steep and rugged path encountered at my outset!

Even thus it fared with every object of human pursuit. When considered from that distance which only left its leading features discernible, each alike promised a series only of unalloyed enjoyments; and each—when its lesser details rose in sight, only showed itself the harbour of a thousand petty troubles, nameless inconveniences, and hourly cares and restraints, waiting to devour inch by inch the felicity of that possession which, viewed in the gross, seemed so attractive.

"Away then," cried I, "for ever away all further chase after these visions, as lying as they are gaudy,—after these fire-flies of the mind, which only flit over swamps, and, when caught, leave a sting! Who would wish for their unsubstantial glare, while rich fruits, ripe for gathering, grow by his way side?"—and hereupon, lest I should dearly purchase disappointment, I determined for ever to renounce distant schemes, of whatever sort or description they might be:—for, fool as I still was, I forgot that there may be great pleasure in the pursuit even of an object found worthless when attained; and that he manages his means of happiness but poorly, who, while his existence affords room both for realities and dreams,—while in

fact dreams are wanted to fill up the unavoidable chasms intervening between the few pleasing realities,—renounces all those airy but delightful phantoms of the imagination—last to exhaust or to cloy.

Indeed I made a mistake more woful still than that of only renouncing whatever depended for its final attainment on future contingencies. Contemplating Hadjee-Aga, my new model, only in a small part of his conduct, and not considering that the charm which surrounded his tranquillity, derived, like that of the immoveable sun, from the extensive diffusion of its beneficial influence, I contracted my plan of present enjoyment until it became wholly selfish and sensual. Wholly intent upon those pleasures which flourish only in youth, and health, and freedom, I overlooked the other better portion of those allotted to man, which do not fade even in age, in infirmity, and in durance.

The merit of the new design I had conceived; the wisdom of thus founding the whole fabric of my earthly happiness on gratifications wholly tangible, still continued the ruling theme of my self-applauding thoughts, when I began to discover Scutari, the principal outpost of the capital on the Asiatic shore; and in the neighbourhood of that city—harshly edging the horizon—the black streak of cypresses that mark its immense cemeteries, the last resting-

place of those who, dying in Constantinople, fear that their bones may some day be disturbed, if laid in the unhallowed ground of Europe.

A dense and motionless cloud of stagnant vapours ever shrouds these dreary realms. From afar a chilling sensation informs the traveller that he approaches their dark and dismal precincts; and as he enters them an icy blast, rising from their inmost bosom, rushes forth to meet his breath, suddenly strikes his chest, and seems to oppose his progress. His very horse snuffs up the deadly effluvia with signs of manifest terror, and, exhaling a cold and clammy sweat, advances reluctantly over a hollow ground, which shakes as he treads it, and loudly re-echoes his slow and fearful step. So long and so busily has time been at work to fill this chosen spot,—so repeatedly has Constantinople poured into this ultimate receptacle almost its whole contents, that the capital of the living, spite of its immense population, scarce counts a single breathing inhabitant for every ten silent inmates of this city of the dead. Already do its fields of blooming sepulchres stretch far away on every side, across the brow of the hills and the bend of the valleys: already are the avenues which cross each other at every step in this domain of death so lengthened, that the weary stranger, from whatever point he comes, still finds before him many a dreary mile of road between marshalled tombs and mournful

cypresses, ere he reaches his journey's seemingly receding end; and yet, every year does this common patrimony of all the heirs to decay still exhibit a rapidly increasing size, a fresh and wider line of boundary, and a new belt of young plantations, growing up between new flower-beds of graves.[4]

As I hurried on through this awful repository, the pale far-stretching monumental ranges rose in sight, and again receded rapidly from my view in such unceasing succession, that at last I fancied some spell possessed my soul, some fascination kept locked my senses; and I therefore still increased my speed, as if only on quitting these melancholy abodes I could hope to shake off my waking delusion. Nor was it until, near the verge of the funereal forest through which I had been pacing for a full hour, a brighter light again gleamed athwart the ghost-like trees, that I stopped to look round, and to take a more leisurely survey of the ground which I had traversed.

"There," said I to myself, "lie, scarce one foot beneath the surface of a swelling soil, ready to burst at every point with its festering contents, more than half the generations whom death has continued to mow down for near four centuries in the vast capital of Islamism. There lie, side by side, on the same level, in cells the size of their bodies, and only distinguished by a marble turban somewhat longer or deeper—somewhat rounder or squarer,—person-

ages in life far as heaven and earth asunder, in birth, in station, in gifts of nature, and in long laboured acquirements. There lie, sunk alike in their last sleep,—alike food for the worm that lives on death—the conqueror who filled the universe with his name, and the peasant scarce known in his own hamlet; Sultan Mahmoud, and Sultan Mahmoud's perhaps more deserving horse;[5] elders bending under the weight of years, and infants of a single hour; men with intellects of angels, and men with understandings inferior to those of brutes; the beauty of Georgia, and the black of Sennaar; Visiers, beggars, heroes and women. There perhaps mingle their insensible dust the corrupt judge and the innocent he condemned, the murdered man and his murderer, the adulteress and her injured husband, the master and his meanest slave. There vile insects consume the hand of the artist, the brain of the philosopher, the eye which sparkled with celestial fire, and the lip from which flowed irresistible eloquence. All the soil pressed by me for the last two hours was once animated like myself; all the mould which now clings to my feet, once formed limbs and features similar to my own. Like myself, all this black unseemly dust once thought, and willed, and moved!—And I, creature of clay like those here cast around; I, who travel through life as I do on this road, with the remains of past generations strewed along my trembling path; I

who, whether my journey last a few hours more or less, must still, like those here deposited, shortly rejoin the silent tenants of some cluster of tombs, be stretched out by the side of some already sleeping corpse, and while time continues its course, have all my hopes and fears—all my faculties and prospects—laid at rest on a couch of clammy earth: shall I leave the rose to blush along my path unheeded, the purple grape to wither unculled over my head? and in the idle pursuit of some dream of distant grandeur that may delude me while I live, spurn, till death mock my speed, all the present delights which invite my embrace?—Far from my thoughts be such folly! Whatever tempts let me take: whatever bears the name of enjoyment, henceforth, let me, while I can, make my own!"

It was thus that scenes, which at other times and with a mind differently predisposed, might have frightened away every scheme of enjoyment in which the sense had a share, now only made me hug my wholly sensual plan with greater paternal fondness.

On my arrival at Constantinople I proceeded immediately to execute my sage intentions. So constantly did I keep the fear of death before my eyes, that I never procrastinated the smallest of the pleasures of life; nor suffered the least unseasonable reflection to break in upon my wiser employment of my hours. I wanted no attendant to re-

mind me daily that I was mortal; but, wholly unadmonished, lived each day as if it was to be my last.

While skudding full sail down the stream of pleasure, a sudden side puff of the most extravagant ambition which had ever yet arisen in my foolish head, blew across the current whose impulse I passively obeyed, and drove me for a time wholly from my course. It was occasioned by a report, true or false, spread at Pera, of the state of complete anarchy into which had fallen the autocratical boudoir of all the Russias, by the dismissal, or discomfiture, or death of some reigning favourite. Two or three youngsters, it was added, gifted only with overweening presumption, had attempted to succeed the fallen hero, but had died of mere fright previous to their installation. In this situation of affairs it struck me that I might have a chance, and only needed to be seen, in order to charm, and win the prize.

The adventure seemed worth while trying every way. In the first place, a Greek of talent was always sure of promotion in the Russian service. It is true I had been in that of the Turks: but *that* circumstance only rendered my posture the more promising. Friends after all were friends; whilst enemies must be won over. It is true, moreover, that there was a great disparity between the lady's age and that of her self-destined admirer: but I knew that, if I could get over the objection,

she would; and in order not to let it arrest me, determined only to see in every furrow of her face the fold of a well-filled purse, and in every spot or freckle on her fair skin the insignia of some brilliant order. Once, therefore, a smart tight laced colonel in the Bréobraïski body guard, who doubted the rest? Who would want resolution, if required to remove an emperor, or to console an empress? Not Anastasius for certain! "Chill of age nor of climate," cried I, "shall stop me; I shall grasp at all, become another Potemkin, rule an empire, have a court, alternate between arranging fêtes and planning campaigns; pay my card-money in diamonds, make mosaic-work of provinces, plant orange and citron groves on hanging terraces of icicles, and, when tired of illuminations on the Neva, set on fire the Bosphorus—and transport the seat of empire from the vicinity of the White Sea, to the shores of the Black Sea!"

I had already put myself into regular training; and for the purpose of accustoming my eye to the familiar contemplation of the great Ekatharina's charms, had actually, Mohammedan as I was, bought a plaster bust of her majesty, in more respects than one, as I was told, greatly resembling the original; when a little Greek baggage of Pera stepped in between, and audaciously seized upon the destined minister of the mighty autocratrix of all the Russias.

The place where I sat by preference, while combining my plan, was my bay window; and this bay window happened to face a gaze-boo, where sat in the same way, when musing on her projects, a fair Greek widow, who, it seems, was not reserving herself for any northern potentate whatsoever. Somehow the fascinating Katello contrived—without the least intention—to show me through the trellis-work of her Shah-nishin,[6] almost every item of her various attractions (and she possessed a good many) in regular succession.

First was beheld—by mere chance—a bright eye, very dark, full of fire, and not at all the worse for wear, notwithstanding all the service it had seen. It incautiously showed itself while in the innocent act of watching the state of the weather, and the aspect of the clouds. Next peeped out—lest I should think there was but one—its companion; very much resembling the other in most particulars, and which went forth into the street very much upon the same guileless errand. In adjusting these said eyes to the small openings left for them by the laths, came in view somewhat lower than themselves, the tip of a little nose very prettily turned. Presently some acquaintance of the lady's, situated on my side of the street—but whom I never could descry—gave cause for certain signs in dumb show, chiefly performed by a pair of pouting lips of the true vermilion hue; and these signs were accom-

panied by certain looks, whose lightning glanced so close by me as actually almost to singe off the end of my left mustachio, which indeed was fined off to an immeasurable point. Nor did the reluctant display of distant attractions end here. Ever and anon the settling of the perverse blinds required the ministry of a certain number of rosy fingers, most gracefully tapered; but these ill trained attendants set about their task with such provoking awkwardness, that for the most part two round white arms were obliged in their turn to venture out as auxiliaries, for the purpose of reinstating what the hands had undone. In fine, one day, more than usual efforts to put to rights an entangled window-curtain caused such dreadful confusion, that, through the double care of adjusting the drapery overhead without deranging that underneath, neither object was attained, and at last the upholstery of the room came down upon that of its fair tenant. Civility now no longer permitted me to remain an inactive spectator of my neighbour's embarrassments. I ran down to my door, and up to the opposite window, and tried to extricate the adorable widow from her manifold difficulties. Until that instant I had only obtained sight of her person in detached samples; and what I now saw in the piece did not belie the expectations raised. It seemed to defy criticism throughout. I, who could worship the cloven foot itself, *bien chaussé*, was

fascinated with the one I beheld, and, like another Mark Anthony, gave up for love the empire of the world!

In order that the union might begin with speed, and yet be of a nature to terminate with decency, we agreed upon one of those short-hand marriages called by the Turks cabeen:—but, for the purpose of avoiding the obloquy to which nuptials of that sort are liable, notwithstanding their legality, ours were to be kept a secret; and, assuredly, if safety lies in numbers, no secret could be safer, for all the world was told of it:—yet did the wary widow furthermore insist, in order the better to cloke my good reception in private, upon my abusing her roundly in public;—a clause, from which the natural gallantry of my disposition recoiled at first as from an atrocious crime.

But by degrees I gave into the scheme more readily. In fact—from what change in my optics I know not—I began after a time to think that some fault might be found here and there, without doing great violence to truth. Some of the deceitful Katello's beauties seemed, in my eyes at least, much diminished, and others wholly vanished; I might almost say, wiped away. Her eyebrows had lost their evenness, and her lips their colour: her very eyes, I could have sworn, had shrunk in their sockets; and though her mouth was become proportionably larger, this scarce made amends for the

other abridgments. What I had before viewed as a beauty spot, I now saw as a huge mole; and a certain easy languor in her gait had grown into a positive lameness. The lady pretended to be little better pleased with the bargain herself;—nay, when I boasted of my zeal in following her instructions, and, in particular, of the unfavourable description I had given of her ancles, so far from retracting her complaints and resuming her good humour, she fell into a most outrageous passion, and cried, "It was her conduct, not her person, she had bidden me abuse!"

I promised to do so yet, paid the forfeit money, and resumed my liberty. Enough had now been achieved in my opinion, in the way of marriage, for the acquittal even of my Mohammedan conscience; to the peace of which I deemed four wives by no means necessary, either simultaneously or even successively, whatever may be thought on the subject in Christendom,—nay, whatever might be asserted even by the more strict and rigorous among my Islamite friends themselves, who ceased not to din in my ears that celibacy was a continual transgression of the law, and that every man as well as woman of a religious turn of mind made it a point of duty to live constantly married, in some way or other. Neither the charms of a young Halebeen[7] of sixteen, described to me by my female scouts as already weighing eighty okkas, nor even those of a

young lady from Adrianople, a year or two older indeed, but weighing full half a kantar, could therefore conquer my obstinate resolution.

But I soon found that so entire an abandonment of the duties of matrimony was indulging overmuch in the delights of ease and quiet—was overshooting the purposed mark; that, hard as may be the toil of too severe a task, equally heavy was the burthen of complete idleness—equally irksome the lot of lacking all employment—equally oppressive the labour of having constantly to seek some new amusement; or, rather, of being constantly obliged to supply by some imaginary wants the absence of real substantial necessities. None of my contrivances for this purpose struck at the root of the evil; and often, in the midst of the most boundless mirth and revelry, I caught myself regretting those times of toil and danger, when I used to have a meal one day, and to go without the next; to lie down under a hedge one night, and on that ensuing to remain like a stork upon my legs; and, always on the alert, alternately to smoke a pipe and to despatch an enemy.

In the midst of this irksome ease, a letter came from Smyrna which gave a new impulse to my thoughts and wishes. It was written by a distant relation settled at Trieste, who, having employed his whole life in accumulating a considerable fortune, was now beginning to consider how to pre-

vent its waste after his death. Grown old and infirm, he wished for some younger branch of the family stock, willing to bear him company during the remainder of his days, on condition of becoming his heir on his decease. Cassis Pharaoon, formerly collector of the customs at Cairo, but lately fled with all his treasure to the Emperor's dominions, had mentioned me as likely to acquit myself well in both offices; and my cousin, called to Smyrna on business, felt anxious to see me and to sound my disposition. His invitation held out such flattering hopes that I could not resist it, but again set out for the place of figs and raisins, determined to outdo them in sweetness in my intercourse with my well-intentioned relation.

Before I could reach Broossa the night had come on. Its obscurity just allowed me to perceive, creeping among the tombs, a something which bore a suspicious look, and at first left me doubtful whether I should honour it with my notice or continue my way. Curiosity at last got the better of discretion. I followed the vision; bidding it, whether man or devil, to stop and to answer. But as I advanced it silently retreated, and with so much speed that I must have lost the scent but for a gravestone over which the phantom stumbled. It now, to my great amazement, divided in two. One part remained motionless where it had fallen, the other kept running on; and both, as it proved,

with equal reason for their different behaviour,—the stationary half being nothing but a sackful of dead men's bones, the moving one the living thief who was conveying them away. Again I cried to this personage to stop, if he wished not to be shot; and he now faced about, but fell upon his knees, and, in the shape of a caloyer, related his story to move me to compassion. Sub-deacon to one of the monasteries on the Agios Oros, he was, he said, with his archimandrite on an eleemosynary tour. At the last place of halting the worthy pair had found their stock of holy ware run so low as to require replenishing. The nearest burying-ground offered the readiest means; and the contents of the bag were nothing more than a few straggling thigh bones of Turks, picked up in the said repository, to compose a fresh assortment of Christian relics.

On hearing this account, "wretch," cried I, "or rather, true jackall, come to despoil our graves! What should prevent me from making a relic of yourself?"

"Only the circumstance," humbly replied the caloyer, "that it would not be worth the while, at least, in the way of punishment. My halcyon days are over. The line of route marked out for us draws to a close; and in less than a fortnight we must perforce return to our convent, to fast, and pray, and see nothing in a human form worth looking on, for the remainder of our miserable lives!"

"Then to kill you would be a mercy," said I, and let the fellow go,—glad myself to reach a not distant khan, where I soon retired to rest. Unfortunately the caloyer's bag of bones, thus irregularly canonised, had reminded me of a favourite topic of Eugenius, namely, the gradual change that takes place in the component elements of each organic body, and the successive appropriation that may thence happen of the same identical particles to different bodies:—and the idea of what must be the consequence of this ordination haunting me as I went to sleep, I dreamt that I saw a parcel of souls exceedingly distressed at the sound of the last summons, one half from finding themselves each pulled different ways by bodies of different ages, which they had during their lives successively tenanted; and the other half, from finding no bodies at all left for their reception;—the materials of those which they had inhabited having since been purloined by later generations. So great an effect had the embarrassment of these poor souls upon me, that I rose in the utmost perturbation, and, stumbling over some camel-drivers asleep in the passage, I mistook them for unoccupied carcasses, of which I was going to dispose in favour of the hapless destitutes, when a powerful resistance at once roused and rendered me sensible of my error. My humane endeavours had this good effect, however, that in an instant the whole khan was on foot, and

I enabled thereby to set off at as early an hour as my anxiety to reach Smyrna had made me wish overnight.

Alas! on my arrival in that city, I found I needed not have made so much diligence. My loving cousin Delvinioti had returned to Trieste even before I set off from Stambool, and without so much as leaving a note or message to account for the abrupt proceeding. This was rather mortifying, and made me look very foolish. I stormed, and raved, and blustered: I considered whether I should not go after my perfidious relation, and call him out in single combat; but at last, recollecting that the disclosure of one slight provokes others, I determined to look highly pleased; swore I only returned to Smyrna for the benefit of the climate, and, to make good my assertion, resolved to stay the winter, and to spend all my money, in order that I might seem very happy.

CHAPTER II.

In most heirs to humanity thirty seems to be the age at which those wilder passions, produced more by the heat of the blood than by the perversion of the reason, having exhaled their greatest fire, though they may still warm, no longer torture the frame: and that age I had now attained;—and I might now, according to the usual course of things, consider myself safe from all danger of being hurried headlong, by the madness of uncontrollable desires, into an abyss of misery and regret.

But if the different species of noxious principles, physical and moral, too liberally mixed up in our natures, are by most constitutions thrown off at a single crisis, which, mortal when too severe, renders life more secure where it has ended favourably, they find others incapable, either from their weakness or from the strength of the virus, to expel it entirely on the first conflict, however great be the effort and complete appear the victory. In these, when all the poison is considered as exhaled and all the danger as past, there will—at the very moment when every long agonized heart of friend or parent hails the deceitful vision of an infallible re-

covery—take place a relapse:—and this relapse ends in death!

Thus it happened with me. At that very period when, having for the first time magnanimously withstood some very powerful temptations, I deemed myself safe thenceforward from those fiercer tyrants of the heart which lie chiefly in ambush for their victim on the threshold of manhood; when I began foolishly to exult in my firmness:—as if I had only by this forbearance been collecting more copious materials for a more destructive conflagration,—a flame arose in my breast, which shook my whole being—body and soul—unto its very basis, and left the remainder of my worthless life a scene of ruin, remorse, and desolation!

Yet did the events commence in gaiety, which ended thus fatally.

In the course of my former mercantile transactions at Smyrna, I had made in that city a few sober acquaintances, whom I used occasionally to visit. The men with whom I habitually lived were a more jovial set;—amphibious beings, found in all sea-ports, who consider the land only as a place of passage, regard the sea as their proper element, and feel equally at home wherever its waves waft their restless existence: who, like the pebbles on the beach, lose through dint of constant friction all their original distinctness of shape in one uniform similarity of rude, indiscriminate polish, and, with

a very complete assortment of the vices of every different region which they in turns frequent, seem to belong to no one race, or country, or religion in particular.

In order peremptorily to exclude from their society all such individuals as might retain the smallest tendency to fall into the antiquated errors of a sober and sedate deportment, these giddy sons of joy had once upon a day devoted one entire forenoon to business, and had drawn up a long list of regulations, which every candidate was held to subscribe ere he could obtain the high honour of admission. As to me, so anxious was I to pay the noble fraternity every compliment in my power, that I put my name to the conditions blindfold.

On perusing them afterwards, however, I found but little which every spirited young fellow does not think himself, even in the absence of a positive engagement, equally bound in mere honour to comply with: for who—to use the language of the place in which this noble association had sprung up—would become a principal in a connubial firm, and take a female partner at his own risk and peril, that could, by trading on another man's bottom, add to his other pleasures the inexpressible delight of making perhaps his most intimate friend a bankrupt both in honour and in happiness? what youth of true refinement could brook in the object of his worship a conduct so indelicate as that of selling her person, in

a mercantile way, for a definite jointure, while she might mark the difference of her feelings from those of the mere venal syren, by disregarding every dictate of interest or of prudence? where is the man of spirit who would be content with exerting purchased rights in an open, straight forward, legal manner, as long as he was enabled to add to his raptures all the zest of difficulties, and dangers, and mystery, and mischief? and what hero in gallantry would prize his mistress's devotion, unless it had been put to the test by breaking through every restraint of fear, shame, and pride?—And these were the whole of the conditions imposed by the rules of the society: but so tender-hearted were its members, that, while feeling the propriety of the restrictions which confined their choice, they nevertheless pitied most sincerely the number of poor females irresistibly smitten with their charms, to whom they were prevented from extending the solace of their attentions.

Absolutely stunned by their jactitations, and obliged to assume the same tone in order to avoid contempt, I was, for the mere support of my character, in the act of engaging to find favour in a given time with whatever beauty might be considered as the most inaccessible in Smyrna, when, in the very midst of the circle collected to witness my boastings, I received the following note:

"You are a man of enterprise; you part with

your money freely; you complain, I am told, of too much facility: but is not the game you pursue ignoble? You visit the house of Chrysopulo, and yet you overlook its fairest gem, Euphrosyne!"

I made no doubt that this note had been indited by some of the party present,—perhaps by the whole set, in council assembled. It seemed a sort of public defiance, a gauntlet thrown by all, which I must take up, or lose my reputation for gallantry. I therefore read the epistle aloud, and pledged myself on the spot to gain the prize selected, or to forfeit the place which I held in the society. Every head shook in doubt of my success, or rather every lip curled up in derision of my presumption. Flushed with wine I felt my foolish pride alarmed, and offered to stake large and unequal sums all round the circle, on what I imagined to be a certain conquest. They were eagerly accepted: I found myself engaged ere I scarcely knew to what; and when I looked round, I had the satisfaction to see all my friends chuckle inwardly, as if already in possession of my money.

The subject of the fatal wager was a young lady related to a wealthy Greek merchant, with whose wife she lived as a companion. Euphrosyne passed for a great beauty, and had recently been betrothed, it was said, to the son of another Greek merchant, proverbial for his riches. Money, therefore, which on all other occasions I had found an useful weapon

of attack, was in this instance turned against me, and converted into a powerful means of defence.

I used indeed—as stated in the insidious note—sometimes to call upon the family, of which the fair Euphrosyne formed so great an ornament. Its experienced chief had assisted me in some of my mercantile purchases: but these meetings on mere business were never allowed to be illumined by the radiance of Euphrosyne's beauties. The destined husband himself could scarce ever get sight of his intended spouse. Whenever even his licensed footsteps were heard near the threshold, the older females of the family used to conjure the nymph away, or at least to form round her person a fence so impenetrable, as to set at defiance her swain's hottest fire of sighs and glances. What wonder, therefore, that a stranger and a Mohammedan, whose visits were necessarily rare, and whose appearance put to flight every member of the gynecæum unprotected by the ægis of age or ugliness, should never have beheld this paragon of perfection, or known aught of her charms but from common report?

This circumstance, however, no longer had power to influence my conduct. Such was the dilemma into which my thoughtlessness had betrayed me, that, even were Euphrosyne to offer to my eyes no charms whatsoever, I still must obtain her, or submit to ruin,—ruin of a reputation in truth suf-

ficiently despicable, and ruin of a fortune which I wanted the courage to despise.

Upon the whole, therefore, I rather wished not to behold my destined victim—for so I must call her—sooner than was absolutely necessary for the furtherance of my nefarious purpose; lest a countenance, resembling, it was said, that of an angel both in innocence and loveliness, should disarm my villany of the coolness requisite to crown its attempts. All that I wanted in the first instance was to gain some intelligence among such inferior inhabitants of the fortress menaced, as, not yet exalted to the angelic state, might favour from within whatever operations from without against the citadel might be deemed most expedient.

On this subject I had begun to meditate very earnestly, the moment the long protracted revels of our meeting place permitted me to go home and rest my weary limbs; and on this same subject, I still continued meditating with equal intensity, as, after a late and lazy rising, I trailed my torpid limbs to the door the next morning, in order to inhale with fresh air, fresh ideas and fresh spirits.

Alas! Cupid, fond of mischief, saw that which was hatching in my breast. In the midst of my uncertainty he sent tripping by my threshold, as if going on her morning's errands, one of the female attendants of the very family selected by our society to writhe under the pangs of unmerited dishonour;

and one of no less consequence than Euphrosyne's own waiting woman: the very person whom, in my unprincipled eagerness, I could have implored my accommodating stars to throw in my way. The waiting woman's face—I do not know why—seemed familiar to me, and equally familiar to her appeared to be my own features; for, on catching my eye she curtsied so graciously, as almost to assure me by her mere manner, of an unlimited devotion to my most unbounded wishes.

It would have been positively churlish toward the smiling nymph, as well as neglectful of my own interest, to let so fair an opportunity slip through my fingers. After some requisite ceremonial on my part and a decent demur on hers, I induced the diligent Sophia to enter my abode; and there ...., but of what consequence is it that I should detail by what arguments she was won over to my purpose? Suffice it to state that on disclosing my situation and wishes, so poorly acted was the horror with which such proposals are always at the first outset received, as almost to make me conceive, from the facility of the domestic, a prejudice against the fair fame of the mistress herself. A well filled purse given on the spot as an earnest, and a considerable sum of money pledged as a final recompense, sufficed very soon to obtain a promise of unrestricted co-operation in all my designs. It was only on being particularly thanked for so ready

a compliance with my entreaties, that the waiting woman, with a becoming modesty, strove to lessen its merit. "Had Euphrosyne been suspected of harbouring the smallest spark of affection for her future consort,"—the lady observed—"not all the treasures in the universe would have obtained from her so much as a mere patient listening to my scheme: but the contrary being notorious, she in fact favoured my suit as much from anxiety for her mistress's happiness, as from compassion for my sufferings." I only praised her considerate motives the more on this welcome information. It rendered my design at once less heinous in the conception, and less difficult to execute. To erase old impressions ere new ones are substituted is an arduous task, and of doubtful success; but on a blank sheet of paper, what penman even of the most ordinary abilities flourishes not away as he pleases?

Fully as Sophia understood my purpose to be independent of any very decided feelings of love harboured in my own breast, she nevertheless could not help observing how much it might be forwarded by some such sort of sentiment raised in Euphrosyne's tender bosom: and, after sagaciously adding that nothing was so essential to falling in love with people as seeing them, she proposed to submit me for the approval of her mistress, in a walk with a large party of friends, planned for the next day

in the fields outside the city. "It is absolutely necessary," cried she, "that you should be there as if by accident. Take no notice of us, but only give us an opportunity of noticing you. Mine shall be the care to make a transient glimpse produce a long remembrance. A turn or two will suffice for that purpose;—then, away again, on your life!—and curb your impatience till the next morning disclose to you—as it will—what conversation may have taken place between me and my young lady at bed-time."

The hint was not lost upon one so eager as Anastasius to embrace whatever could gratify his vanity. With more than usual attention therefore to my toilet, I began the next day. I attired myself, not richly—for on some occasions I felt jealous of my own dress, and fearful lest my finery should eclipse my person—but as becomingly as possible. No insignificant gewgaws were permitted to conceal the athletic structure of my frame, and the graceful knitting of my limbs. A mere tuft of jesmine, white as my own teeth, was made to relieve the brown polish of my skin, and the jetty black of my beard; and art and nature were, throughout my whole appearance, blended in such just proportions, as every where to adorn and to relieve each other.

Thus attired for conquest, I sallied forth on a solitary ramble, and sought the verdant meadows with as much eagerness as does the fiery courser,

when, liberated from the gloomy stable, he rejoins in the field with loud neighings his blithe and prancing companions.

Not long had I reached the happy valley when the youthful troop appeared, and by long peals of laughter proclaimed its too great confidence in a deceitful security. I first kept myself concealed at a distance, let the giggling girls duly begin their sports, and only, when from my ambush I saw them fairly entrapped in a small and secluded nook of which I commanded the entrance, did I, like one attracted by the noise, leisurely step forward to petrify the gay band by my sudden appearance. Every gambol immediately ceased; and long before I could come up with the outermost detachment, was every scarf and shawl at its office to conceal its fair owner. The change from the brightest sunshine to a sky all clouded over is less rapid even in the month of March. I therefore walked only once round the party, more to be seen than to see, and having cast a single keen though furtive look on its leader, or rather, on the ample veils which completely dimmed her lustre, I immediately retired with the air of one who begs pardon for an unintentional intrusion, which he dares not exult in, but cannot regret.

It may be supposed that through all Euphrosyne's jealous fences of silk, and wool, and cotton—rendered doubly impenetrable by every addition of

fringe, and trimmings, and tassels—not one single feature of her face had been revealed to my searching eye. Even of her figure not much could be discerned: but what of that? Such is the force of imagination, that I felt as if I had been permitted to dwell to my heart's utmost wish on all I came to see. I went away completely smitten with Euphrosyne's air, and grace, and playful manner. What I had not been permitted to behold I moulded after my own taste; and all the rest of the day, and all the ensuing night, I kept my fancy busied with the beautiful image chiefly of my own creation.

Early the next morning walked in my friend Sophia. Her practice was to waste no precious time in idle forms. I eagerly inquired what symptoms my appearance had produced in Chrysopulo's fair charge. "Draw your own conclusions," said the faithful servant, "I shall simply relate facts.

"As soon as at bed-time with Euphrosyne's bodice her nimble tongue was let loose, and the nightly hour arrived for reviewing the occurrences of the day, you came on the *tapis*;—for on either side it would have seemed suspicious not to notice so remarkable an incident as that which interrupted the gambols of the morning. 'You know the person, by whom we were thus surprised,' said I, significantly.

"'No,' replied Euphrosyne; and wondered that I should be able to remove her ignorance.

" 'That is no fault of mine,' I rejoined, 'when our good or evil stars have made the intruder a friend of your cousin's, and a visitor at our house. Had I however conceived the possibility of our meeting so dangerous a youth in so secluded a spot, we should have directed our walk elsewhere. They say it is impossible to behold this Moslemin, and to refrain from loving him.'

" 'Nonsense!' cried Euphrosyne, with a forced laugh and an involuntary sigh.

" 'Nonsense it probably is,'—resumed I, in a careless manner—'though I might, if I pleased, add what certainly deserves not that name.'

" 'How?' cried Chrysopulo's cousin precipitately; —but immediately again checking herself, 'No,' added she, 'do not tell me: it is no business of mine!'

" 'Indeed I would not tell you, even though you should entreat me,' was my reply, 'unless you made me a solemn promise that I never should have cause to regret my too ready frankness.'

" Euphrosyne now began to apprehend that the silence she had exacted might look like want of confidence in her own steadiness. 'I make the promise you require,' said she, 'but merely lest you should fancy I fear any danger from your indiscretion.'

" I then told the blushing girl that you had seen her, and suffered for her all the pangs of the most

ardent love. Emboldened by the silence with which this disclosure was received, I even went so far as to enlarge on your merits; but soon I found that agitation alone stopped the trembling maiden's breath. My comment gave her time to recover. Having however suffered me to begin the encomium unimpeded, she allowed me to conclude my speech unchecked, in order that her not cutting it short from the first might seem done with design. It was only when I no longer knew what to say, and hemmed as for an answer, that I was asked with an affected composure, to what all this was to lead?

"I felt disconcerted, and Euphrosyne, after waiting a few seconds, desired I might not trouble myself to seek a reply: 'she must,' she said, 'inform her relations of my improper conversation.' I could only make her desist from this intention by recalling her promise."

This detail of Sophia's, however, sufficed to convince me (perhaps without just foundation) that the shaft which I had aimed at Euphrosyne's heart had not recoiled wholly unfelt,—that it had made some slight impression;—and I was going to propose further measures founded on this supposition, when a tremendous noise at the door of my lodging announced the riotous entrance of all my bosom friends. I had only time to thrust my accomplice into my back room, and went out to meet the jolly party. So loud were the inquiries from all quar-

ters respecting the progress of my love affair, that, terrified lest Sophia should hear them, and feel deterred from her perilous purpose, I tried to entice the troop away by running down stairs the first. The whole procession immediately followed; to my great relief again sallied forth, with myself, into the street; and proposed a morning lounge on the quay, in which—disposed or not—I was forced to join: it however gave Sophia an opportunity of slipping away unperceived.

During the remainder of the morning I could think of nothing but Euphrosyne. From not feeling any desire to behold my charmer's features, I now was unable, from what I already had seen and heard, to rest until I had obtained of her beauties a full and unrestrained view. The day happened to be a Greek festival. In the evening, by calling at Chrysopulo's and entering unannounced, I was sure to find the whole family collected.—I determined to risk the adventure.

The peals of merriment which resounded through the house, both guided my footsteps and drowned the noise of my approach. I entered unperceived into the very place of entertainment. Euphrosyne, seated in her costliest attire at the further end of the hall, had just begun to recount—half in speech, half in still more expressive pantomime—a playful story. Every eye and ear, riveted on her performance, was turned away from the door, and I had

already advanced a considerable way into the room before my visit was perceived. When indeed my presence became noticed, such was the sensation it created, that a kite could scarce have made a greater on alighting among the timid tenants of the poultry yard. All the females set up a warning shout, rushed forward, threw a veil over Euphrosyne's still unconscious face, and formed round her person an impenetrable fence. The merry tale with which the thoughtless girl was entertaining the company immediately ceased; the magician whom she was in the act of killing with her bodkin remained alive to do his mischief, and, in the confusion which pervaded the assembly, her own form —as if conjured away by witchcraft—rapidly vanished from my searching sight.

But it was too late: I had seen, and I had heard! One single glance of her languishing black eyes had, from underneath her silken eyelashes, met my own inquiring look; while, at the same time, one last expiring note of her soft melodious voice had, from her ambrosial lip, dropped upon my outstretched ear; and if the former had sunk like liquid fire into my heart's inmost core, the other continued to vibrate, like the last dying note of the lyre, on my maddened brain.

All the powers of language were of course called in requisition to express the inexpressible pleasure derived by the Greek party from my unexpected

visit. While the only object of my intrusion was most studiously kept out of sight, I was with the most indefatigable industry made welcome to every thing else in the house that could be named or thought of: was introduced to every individual I did not care to know, and was offered every dainty I did not wish to taste.

A statue could not have shown less sense of these unbounded civilities.—Fascinated, and fixed in that same spot which had so lately felt the pressure of Euphrosyne's lovely form, I had not the power to speak, nor even to take leave and retire, till fairly wished by every person present, where indeed of my own accord I was going fast enough.

Having with faltering step reached my house, I there yielded myself up body and soul to my new phrensy. Only after musing over the dying embers of my mangal[1] until my lamp burnt dim did I seek my lonely couch. I then undressed and went to bed; but went not to repose. Instead of blood, unquenchable flames seemed to flow through my veins; and, racked in every joint by the rage of a passion become more hopeless in proportion as it was become more ardent, I tossed about all night, trying to grasp my fair one's unsubstantial image. At last, exhausted by my fruitless efforts to give body and colour to the delusive phantom, all power of thought forsook me, and I sunk into a state, not of sleep, but of half conscious half insensible torpor.

I rose with the lark, though not as blithe; and counted the slowly passing hours until Sophia was to come. I panted for the appearance of my confidante, no longer as before merely to consult her, but to talk of, to expatiate upon, to rave about Euphrosyne!

In vain I waited and waited; and at every footstep in the street, and at every rap at the door, and at every noise on the stairs, flew out to meet my wingless Iris. The faithless messenger came not at the time appointed; she came not after; she came not at all! Nor did note or message come in her stead, to account for her ill-timed non-appearance.

I would have gone, if I durst, to the house blessed by my angel's residence. I did all I could: I walked all day long in sight of its entrance; I watched all that went in, and all that went out. I kept myself in readiness, the moment Sophia appeared, to pounce like a hawk upon the dilatory suivante; but no Sophia appeared in any shape!

Meanwhile, every possible mode of ingratiating myself with the heavenly Euphrosyne passed through my, alas! less heavenly mind. According as the maiden might be more or less sensible of the charms of gold, or accessible to the lures of vanity, or charitable or devout, the mere glitter of St. Mark's dazzling images,[2] or the glory of beholding the haughty Selim at her feet, or the pride of making him promise a thorough reformation, or the hope of

saving his falling soul from perdition, might be tried, I thought, as bribes to win her affections: but, which of these motives for listening to my suit would find the easiest admission into my charmer's heart, and what were the virtues or the faults in her disposition which might be rendered most propitious to my views, remained to me a secret; for, while the sun continued to light up this hemisphere (and in wonder at my behaviour the bright orb of day certainly more than once forgot to move) my traitress of a waiting-woman darkened not my door with her slender shadow.

At dusk, however, and just as I was returning home entirely hopeless, the well known form brushed by me. I followed it to a retired spot, where precipitately turning round as if afraid to waste time: "What have you done!" exclaimed the agitated suivante; "Why would you show yourself in the only place from which you should have staid away?"

"Only," answered I, "to see the lady whom I was making love to."

"And so," rejoined Sophia, "to lose her for ever, as you now inevitably must: for your abrupt visit last night has had the effect of producing all that you could have wished to prevent. The period of the nuptials, uncertain before, is now fixed for to-morrow."

A short struggle in my breast kept my answer during a few seconds suspended on my lips:—at last,

with one concluding but victorious effort: "Sophia," replied I, "my resolution is fixed! While I knew not Euphrosyne, while I yet felt no preference for that angel of heaven, come on purpose to gladden this paltry earth, I could regard her destruction as my sport; but I have beheld the lovely girl, and have fallen into my own thrice cursed snare. Her innocent looks have melted the hardness of my heart. I no longer can bear to blast like the simoom the fair and lovely floweret. I am now ready to perform any sacrifice for the permanent possession of its sweets:—for a possession that may make me happy, without inflicting ruin on the object of my flame. I shall attach her to my fate through the holy ties of wedlock. It is but paying a few sums which I deserve to lose, and feeding afterwards—as I shall have to do—upon love alone!"

Sophia here set up a hellish laugh. As soon as the burst was over: "and so you think," cried she, "that all is to be settled to your liking by this magnanimous resolve,—that you have nothing more to do but to announce your pleasure, and take away your bride! Allow me to undeceive you. Euphrosyne's relations are rich, they are proud, and they are bigoted. Under no circumstances whatever would they suffer a kinswoman of theirs to marry a mohammedan. No—not if the Sultan himself were come in person to demand her. Then judge whether you have a chance; and that, with the faith of the

whole family pledged to a wealthy young Greek, and ready to tie the nuptial knot! Believe me, if you should ever wish Hymen ultimately to crown your flame, you must begin by rendering your success independent of that squeamish deity."

"Sophia," resumed I, "once more let me repeat to you that my resolution is fixed. Adoring Euphrosyne as I do, nothing shall induce me to rob her existence of its bloom, her life of its lasting pride. For once I shall subdue my lawless passions; I shall pay the forfeit of my idle boastings. If, after making sacrifices to her virtue and her peace so weighty as those of all fortune's valued gifts, and all love's unfettered raptures, she accepts me for her husband, well and good! Luxuries she will not find, but affection in abundance. If, on the contrary, she reject me: patience! For once in my life I shall have done what was right, at the expense of my vanity, my fortune, and my happiness."

Sophia at these words turned pale. She seemed to labour with a fearful secret; but seeing me determined: "Man," cried she at last, "listen to woman, but let not woman deceive you any longer. Fear not to despoil what has ceased to exist. I have hitherto felt loth to disclose the dark mystery, but rather than that I should suffer you to become the sport of an arrogant family and the subject of a solemn mockery, I shall reveal to you all—all that

remains hitherto a secret from a prying world. Learn therefore that you no longer are in time to make on too tender a heart the first unlawful impression! Hot kisses have already pressed her lips, for whose embrace you resign yourself to an unavailing martyrdom. The plant still flourishes green and gay; but other hands have culled the blossom."

Here Sophia put her mouth to my ear. I felt as if a snake crept into its folds, and deeply sunk within my heart the venom of her frightful story. "As, however," added my confidante, after her tale had curdled my best blood at its very source,—"the unlucky occurrence has hitherto been kept concealed, they tremble with impatience to conclude so desirable a match, ere it be suspected by the party concerned."

"And this," exclaimed I, "is the conclusion of all my love; and innocence and purity then exist not on earth! Even where one would wish to worship them as things sacred—things to be gazed upon, not approached—they elude one's keenest search; and woman's licentiousness outstrips the thoughts of man! Oh that a bud so fair, so young, should already contain the foul worm of corruption in its bosom! that another should already have rioted unrestrained in what with such painful struggles Anastasius himself was going to give up wholly

from virtuous motives!" And in my wrath I resolved no longer to sacrifice both pleasure and fortune to the shadow of an undeserved reputation. I resolved to resume my before abandoned scheme, no longer from love but from sheer resentment: at the same time binding Sophia by all that was most awful never to divulge the odious secret; lest by its publication I should be prevented from reaping my golden harvest, as I had already been outstripped in gathering a wreath far dearer and more valued.

When however—the first ebullition over—I reconsidered the matter, the thought struck me that Sophia had only disclosed her mistress's secret shame from a fiendlike greediness, and in order not to lose the promised reward; and carrying this reflection somewhat further, I now conceived it possible that a motive which seemed to reign with such unrestraint in this unworthy servant's breast, might have made her invent what she pretended to divulge. Hereupon all my waverings returned, and at last—determined to prefer the chance of erring to that of incurring endless guilt—I reverted to my prior resolution of giving up the pursuit: nay, from fear of fresh relapses, when I saw my informer preparing to call with a sanctified air the whole host of heaven as witnesses to her veracity, I stopped both my ears, and bravely ran away. The moment my astonished informer found her endeavours un-

availing to persuade, or even, to bring me back, her oaths, methought, changed to curses; but these—uttered when already I was in full flight—died away on the distant breeze.

Half pleased half angry with myself for my forbearance, I walked about the town, shunning my friends to whom I had nothing to impart but what must gladden them at my expense, and seriously considering whether, both for the sake of their morals and my purse, I should not by a sudden evolution quit them and Smyrna for ever, when, in the midst of my meditations, a messenger—of those that ply about the streets in search of commissions—struck me on the breast with a small bunch of flowers.

Skilled in the meaning of these mute heralds of love, I snatched the nosegay out of the rude hands by which it seemed profaned; but when I came to consider its arrangement, I found that all I had to learn had not been left to the vague language of the pink and gillyflower: their fragrant leaves concealed a note, and this note contained a lock of hair and a ring.

Eagerly I perused the billet. It began with reproaches. They were, however, of a nature to be endured: "not less painful to a lady was the task of making the last advances than the first; and, were not the very morrow to bring the fatal hour, when what had not been might never more be, no

consideration would have induced the writer to trust her feelings to paper, or to inform me that a passage separated from the chamber of the married couple the maiden's closet; that this closet looked out upon a garden; and that this garden was only divided from the street by a low wall. Sometimes,"—added a wary postcript—" careless servants would leave shutters unbolted: but always a sober family went to rest before twelve!"

Euphrosyne's handwriting I was a stranger to: and this note probably had only been penned by deputy; though couched in better terms than those generally used by servants: but, in how far the professions of the maid had the sanction of the mistress, it was easy to try, and by an unerring test; and the difference between two thousand sequins to pay, or that sum to receive, made it well worth the while. Nor was there any time to be lost. The very next day—as the note itself suggested—would be too late for the experiment. Should I find the passage barred, it was but returning as I went. Why however suspect Sophia of risking a falsehood, which, as such, could not command success, must soon be discovered, and must end in her disgrace? For as to the idea of her scheming a plot to betray me to Chrysopulo, though it had entered my brain, I held it not worthy of a moment's thought. I therefore determined to obey the welcome summons.

Ten minutes before the hour appointed my pistols were loaded, and my person lightened of all useless incumbrance. Wrapped up in my capote I sallied forth, found all things disposed according to promise, easily scaled the wall, had only to push open the blinds, and leaped into the chamber of love, where, half covered only by a light Barbary haïck,[3] Euphrosyne lay, apparently unconscious of aught but the dreams that might engage her youthful fancy. So sweet indeed seemed her slumbers, that, but for irresistible evidence to the contrary, they might have been mistaken for those of innocence, and once more made me hesitate for a moment ere I threw off my cloak, deposited my pistols, and extinguished the lamp.

If at first the real or pretended sleep of my mistress somewhat surprised me, if that surprise grew greater at its long continuance; what was my astonishment when Euphrosyne at last only awoke to start from my embrace, and to utter loud screams, which the pressure of my hand was hardly able to stifle.

Her outcry had been heard ere it could be stopped. Chrysopulo himself had already quitted his consort's balmy side, and, with the carbine which he always kept loaded, had run to whence proceeded the sound. With one effort he burst open the door of the closet.

Already I was standing near its threshold bolt

upright, with my capote on and my pistol pointed. In the dark the merchant mistook me for a robber: he fired his piece, and missed.

I now put mine to his breast. "All I wish," cried I, "is to make you listen. If you value your cousin's honour, favour my escape, and pretend that you were dreaming,—as indeed you should have been."

Chrysopulo, thus enlightened, now trembled with rage. His eyes glistened amid surrounding darkness like those of a maddened tiger. Yet, uncertain how to act, he remained motionless where he stood, while Euphrosyne, mute with shame and despair, was only heard striving to suppress her bitter sobs.

Meanwhile the report of the musket had roused the whole family. Chrysopulo's wife was crying "murder" in her bed, the servants starting up from their first sleep, and the people that passed by in the street knocking at the door until every beam shook in the house. Each instant the noise increased and the uproar came nearer. Another minute, and the immediate scene of action must witness a general irruption.

Chrysopulo now became sensible of the wisdom of my suggestion. Rousing himself from his trance and pointing to the window, "Away, away!" he cried; but cried too late. Already a number of voices sent forth a confused murmur from the identical spot in the garden on which I must have

alighted. Chrysopulo looked whether I might slip under his cousin's couch:—it was too low; or whether upon her wardrobe:—it was too high.

Aghast, we now stared at each other, until in his perplexity the trembling banker—for want of a better expedient—pushed me down in a corner of the room, and there,—tearing from off Euphrosyne's own couch its light covering, turned it into a cloak to my person and my guilt.

Just at this moment rushed in the whole posse. A thousand questions succeeded each other without intermission, and, all circumstances considered, the story which Chrysopulo told in answer was sufficiently plausible. Euphrosyne's terror and confusion, with the other apparent objects of the scene, might without any great stretch of probability be attributed to her cousin's mistake; and the whole terminated to the satisfaction or rather dissatisfaction of the curious, who, fully expecting a long list of dreadful murders, were seemingly somewhat wroth at being put off with a bad dream, and went away wishing the rich Chrysopulo worse suppers, or a better digestion.

Meantime, seeing so many people rush by her door, Chrysopulo's wife herself had mustered up courage to follow the crowd. Being the last to come, she was the last to depart; or rather, she had a mind not to go away at all, and insisted on staying, in order to tranquillize her fair cousin's agitation. She

mistrusted her husband's dream, and wanted to sift his conduct to the bottom: wherefore the alarmed Chrysopulo, unable to confide in her discretion, at once resolved to conquer her resistance by force. He took her by the arm, dragged her out of the room, and, lest she should return to listen, locked her up in her own chamber.

If, fearless myself, I had only reluctantly acted the coward for the sake of others, and had more than once felt tempted, while the mob remained assembled, to start up, to show myself, and to carry away as a trophy of my victory the instrument of my concealment, I now, when the coast was clear and the way open for my own retreat, felt equally desirous of staying, and that, with views somewhat similar to those of Chrysopulo's wife,—namely, to obtain an explanation of a few circumstances not quite intelligible even to the framer of the plot: but for an inquiry of this sort neither the time nor place were fitted; and fresh noises at the door made me run without further delay to the still open window. I thence leaped into the garden, overset or trampled down every flower and vegetable in my way, and, after climbing the wall, got safe into the street, and back to my lonely lodging. There I lay down and began to reflect on the inconstancy of women, who, after sending flattering invitations, scream out as at a rudeness on finding them accepted,—till at last all my bewildered thoughts were

hushed in sleep. The next morning, on awaking in my own bed, with every object around me as orderly and tranquil as the day before, it seemed as if during the whole of the eventful night I had never quitted my solitary pillow!

The first circumstance which afforded me distinct evidence of having trespassed on premises not my own, was Chrysopulo suddenly standing before me, as, still undressed, I lay on my couch revolving in my mind all my strange adventures. Determined to brave what could not be denied, I thanked him for the honour of his early inquiries and begged he would be seated. He took little notice of these insolent civilities, but immediately coming to the point, "You have offered to a hitherto unsullied house," said he, "the cruellest of injuries. How far you have succeeded I neither know nor can bear to inquire. Should your baseness have been disappointed, the fault is not yours: yet, much as I am bound to abhor you, I must stoop to a request."

"Speak," said I; "a petition so agreeably introduced can scarcely meet with a refusal."

"Your crime," answered Chrysopulo, "is thus far only known to ourselves, and to whatever vile abettor of your wickedness may reside under our roof. Even Euphrosyne's intended husband presumes not to cast upon his future consort the smallest shadow of blame, or wishes to defer the long

concerted nuptials. Humbly therefore let me entreat, that out of compassion for the object—the unfortunate object of your lawless violence—you will not carry your cruelty any further, or be so devoid of mercy as to boast of your base attempts. Divulge not the foul stain which you destined our house! Thus may we still hold up our heads among our envious countrymen; and the unhappy Euphrosyne still preserve both her husband and her honour."

Moved by an entreaty so earnest and so discreet, I wholly forgot that the crime of which I stood accused had only been undertaken for the very purpose of being boasted of; felt all at once as anxious as Chrysopulo to prevent its further consequences, and made every promise required by the merchant to quiet his fears. Greatly relieved by my assurances, he almost thanked me for my goodness, and was going to repay it by an unlimited credit on his house, but, having fortunately restrained just in time this excess of gratitude, returned home with a mind more composed and at ease.

But as soon as he was gone it recurred to my thoughts, that the engagement I had taken must defeat the whole object of my achievement, and must silence all those claims on my companions for which I had thus laboured;—nay, that unless I published my victory, I must not only renounce what I had won, but pay what I had not lost;—that I must

part with my whole earthly fortune,—*that* in actual possession as well as *that* in expectancy; and part with both for a fair one, who, even prior to the commencement of my homage, had no longer kept in store any remnant of virtue, through the sacrifice of which to console me for the riches thus renounced on her account. Consistent with the terms of my precipitate promise, I could not even divulge my success, after the object of my silence had been fully attained.

Deeply regretting my imprudence and loudly cursing my good nature, I paced up and down my room half dressed, and expecting every moment to see Sophia come and claim her vile, her now bootless reward; until tired at last of waiting, and attributing her delay to the bustle of the day, I proceeded to achieve my often interrupted toilet. Once indeed a slight temptation came across me to honour the wedding with my presence,—to blast it with my breath!—but I still had some grace left, and contented myself with awaiting at home in the utmost anxiety, the news of the nuptials being happily completed.

CHAPTER III.

I HAD scarcely given the last twist to my turban, when a distant clamour in the street drew me to the window, and made me espy a veiled female, whose uncertain gait and faltering steps had attracted the notice of a troop of foolish boys, and made them follow her with loud hootings. It was impossible not to set down in my mind one so carefully wrapped up and so fearful of being recognised, as the partner of my guilt, coming to demand the wages of her iniquity; and all that baffled my utmost power of conjecture was the change from Sophia's wonted boldness of demeanour, to the apparent timidity and helplessness palpably manifested by my approaching visitor. I could only attribute the phenomenon to Sophia's dismissal from Chrysopulo's family, branded with the marks of public disgrace; on which account I immediately sallied forth to offer her a safe-conduct to my abode. My surprise still increased, when, tendering my ally the protection of my arm, I first saw her hesitate, then shuddering withdraw her hand already clasped in mine, and at last only suffer herself to be dragged into my habitation, after the terror produced by the insults of the gathering mob had as it were entirely deprived her of consciousness; but my astonishment only rose to its

highest pitch, when, tearing off the cumbrous veils, in order to give the fainting maiden some air, I beheld, instead of the daring Sophia, the gentle, the reserved Euphrosyne herself, who scarcely on recovering her senses had time to cast her eyes around her, ere, again sinking down to the ground, she struck her face against the floor, and began wringing her hands with every symptom of the bitterest anguish.

The cause of her having quitted her home I was at a loss to conjecture, but the effect it had of bringing her to mine I hailed at first as a highly fortunate circumstance. Thus would my triumph be blazoned forth without my word being broken. When however I witnessed the excess of my fair one's grief, contrasted as it was with my own joy, I too felt moved, tried to assuage her sorrow by every expression of pity and concern, and, as soon as she seemed able to speak, ventured to inquire what had caused her coming forth thus unattended and forlorn, at the very time when I supposed all Smyrna collected to witness her brilliant nuptials?

"My nuptials," echoed she with a smile of bitterness,—now first suffering her voice to strike my ear,—"when my dishonour is the universal theme!"

"The universal theme!" repeated I,—truly dismayed in my turn. "Then may heaven's direst curse alight upon her who has divulged it!"

"That was myself," replied Euphrosyne, "and your curse has struck home!"

I remained mute with surprise.

"Could I," rejoined my mistress, "to dishonour add deceit? Could I bring a dower of infamy to the man so noble, so generous, that even after my frightful tale he spurned me not away from him;—to the man who deigned in pity to affirm, that my avowal of my involuntary shame rendered me worthier in his eyes, and gave him a stronger assurance of my fidelity, than if I had come to his arms as spotless in body as in mind?"

"And who," added I, "after this sublime speech, ended by rejecting you."

"Ah no!" cried Euphrosyne, "it was I who rejected him: it was I who refused to carry reproach into the house of a stranger, and who for that crime was threatened by my own friends with being cast off, and thrown upon the wide world, helpless and unprotected!—But," added she, covering her face with her hands, and sobbing more bitterly than before, "I suffered not the threat to grow into a reality; I waited not to be turned out of doors. I resolved at once upon the only step which was left me; I asked permission to go to our church, in order that in my fervent prayers heaven might inspire me how to act, and, when alone and in the street, tried to find out your abode, and to seek refuge where alone I had claims."

"What then!" exclaimed I, "from your very threshold you had determined—whatever happened —to cross mine? and it was not the shouts of the

mob only . . . . ? I fancied that I felt you shrinking from my touch, when, in compassion, I seized hold of your hand."

"And could I execute the resolve which I have owned, and not shudder at the thoughts of its baleful consequences?"

These now began to present themselves to my own mind also, in long and fearful array. At first, indeed, the surprise on beholding Euphrosyne thus unexpectedly, the consciousness of my own iniquities, the exultation at seeing its triumph sealed without the smallest violation of my promise, and the sympathy excited by my mistress's evident sufferings, together with a thousand other mixed and indescribable sensations, had induced a momentary forgetfulness of all those reports against Euphrosyne's character which had encouraged me to prosecute my plan, had made that plan receive its fulfilment, and had in their turn been confirmed by my very success. But on hearing not only of an act so uncalled for as Euphrosyne's spontaneous disclosure of her shame, so wanton as her refusal of her still urging suitor, and so strange as her deliberately leaving her husband for her despoiler, the truth—dimmed for a moment—seemed again to burst upon me, and with increased evidence. I now conceived that even my crime might only be the pretence, rather than the real reason of Euphrosyne's renouncing an advantageous match.

Her former dishonour again rising to my mind, lent even her present conduct the colouring of artifice; and if I thought it hard upon me that an assignation proposed by my mistress herself—and that assignation too, proposed by her as not only the first but also the last for which I could hope—should end in her inflicting upon me the burthen of her permanent support, I thought it harder still to be thus heavily visited in consequence of the sins of others. That shelter, therefore, which I had gladly granted Euphrosyne, while it only seemed accidental and transient, I now began to grudge her when it appeared purposely sought as the beginning only of a sojourn which was to have no end; and the burthen of this permanent society was what I determined to ward off to the utmost of my power.

To give my real reasons for so doing was impossible. On reviewing every past circumstance, I felt that from the first wording of the assignation to the close of the interview the successive incidents had been so conducted as to leave me, with every presumptive evidence, not one positive proof of Euphrosyne's having given her consent to my stolen pleasures. No argument against my compliance with her wishes, founded upon her complying too readily with mine—however valid in itself—I therefore knew would be admitted: and, as to the report of her prior guilt with others,—even my own vanity shrunk from suffering an imputation so odious to

lessen the merit of my victory, or the value of my prize: besides, I read in the streaming eyes piteously fixed on mine, pangs too acute still to increase them by a reproach, which must inflict equal agony whether just or unfounded. Appearing therefore to speak more from tenderness for her whom I addressed than for myself, "Euphrosyne," said I, "it was unwise, methinks, to divulge what but for your own spontaneous avowal might have remained an inscrutable secret; it was a thousand times more unwise still, when you found that by an unexampled privilege this deterred not your suitor, yourself to refuse him; but it seems to me the very height of folly willingly to court every form of disgrace, where, as it appears, you still may enjoy every species of distinction. You cannot justify your conduct in casting without necessity such a stain upon your family. Hasten then to repair the mischief while you still are in time; return home immediately, as if you had only offered up an hurried prayer in church, and obviate by your ready acceptance of the worthy Argyropoli all the impending consequences of your thoughtless and precipitate step."

Alas! I addressed one who, wholly bewildered by her own feelings, heeded not, perhaps heard not my words. Euphrosyne, fixing upon me an eye at once vacant and supplicating, continued to preserve an unbroken, and, as I thought, stubborn silence, until at last I deemed it necessary to use terms more

decisive and peremptory. Taking two or three hasty strides across the room, as if still to increase the ferment of my already heated blood: "Euphrosyne," cried I, "it is impossible you can stay with me. I myself am a wanderer on the face of the globe,—to-day here, to-morrow perhaps flying to the earth's furthest extremity. Your remaining under my uncertain roof can only end in total ruin to us both. I must insist upon your quitting my abode, ere your own be no longer accessible to your tardy repentance."

"Ah no!" now cried Euphrosyne, convulsively clasping my knees: "be not so barbarous! Shut not your own door against her, against whom you have barred every once friendly door. Do not deny her whom you have dishonoured the only asylum she has left. If I cannot be your wife, let me be your slave, your drudge. No service, however mean, shall I recoil from when you command. At least before you I shall not have to blush. In your eyes I shall not be what I must seem in those of others: I shall not from you incur the contempt, which I must expect from my former companions; and my diligence to execute the lowest offices you may require will earn for me, not wholly as a bare alms at your hands, that support which, however scanty, I can elsewhere only receive as an unmerited indulgence. Since I did a few days please your eye, I may still please it a few days longer:—perhaps a few days longer

therefore I may still wish to live; and when that last blessing, your love, is gone by,—when my cheek, faded with grief, has lost the last attraction that could arrest your favour, then speak, then tell me so, that, burthening you no longer, I may retire—and die!"

Spite of the tears of sincere sympathy with which I answered this speech, the conviction that all might still be by diligence hushed up, was going to make me urge more strenuously than before Euphrosyne's immediate return,—when a new incident took place, which wholly changed my inclinations and my feelings.

This was no less than a sudden and forcible invasion of my lodgings by the maiden's relations. It had soon been discovered by them, that, instead of going to church, she had come to my abode; and her friends had thereupon walked forth in a body to claim the stray lamb, and to carry it back to the fold. Chrysopulo himself indeed was not of the party: it only consisted of half a dozen of his first and second cousins;—but this posse broke in upon me unceremoniously enough, just as I was urging my mistress by every motive in heaven and upon earth, not to delay her departure another minute, and immediately proceeded to effect by force, what I was only trying to obtain by persuasion.

My readers already know how little I liked the

interference of strangers in my concerns, and how apt I was to act in opposition to their wishes and counsels, from no other motive but to assert my independence or to show my daring: they will not therefore be much surprised to hear that this unlooked for incident caused a sudden and entire revolution in my sentiments, and that, from wishing Euphrosyne to go, while she expressed a wish to stay, I now would have detained her by force, even if she had wished to go. Taking hold, therefore, of the maiden by one arm, while Chrysopulo's friends were pulling her away by the other, I swore that nothing short of death should make me give up a persecuted angel, which had thought fit to seek my protection; and as Euphrosyne herself, when appealed to, seemed to sanction my proceedings, by drawing her veil over her blushing features, her friends were at last induced, by the persuasive gestures which accompanied my words, to give up all further attempts at violent measures.

In truth, they rejoiced in their vile hearts at having it to say, that an insurmountable resistance had baffled all their efforts. Euphrosyne had early been left an orphan: her nearest of kin were all dead; and, though the more distant relations to whose lot it fell to protect her, would have upheld their fair cousin most sedulously in the world, while they had any chance of deriving an additional lustre from her establishment, they were willing enough to drop

the connexion, as soon as her situation was likely to reflect discredit on their name. However loud and boisterous therefore might be the wish they expressed of restoring the fugitive to her family, there lurked not the less satisfaction at the bottom when they found her resolved not to go: and while they pretended to feel exceedingly hurt at Euphrosyne's refusal, they took her at her word with the utmost alacrity, or rather, suffered her mere silence to stand for a denial. Devoutly lifting up their eyes to heaven, and drawing discordant groans from their flinty bosoms, they turned away from one whom they saw so irreclaimably abandoned, and hurried out of the house, lest she should change her mind ere they were out of hearing. When however they found themselves safe, as they thought, in the street, they stopt to announce for the benefit of all who passed by their determination to renounce so unworthy a namesake. Thenceforth they were to regard the nameless profligate as among the departed, and, happen what might, never more to inquire after her fate; and to their credit be it spoken, they adhered in that instance most religiously to their humane and pious vow.

My undisturbed possession of Chrysopulo's fair cousin therefore was now a matter settled; and the lofty, the admired Euphrosyne, who that very morning might still have beheld all Smyrna at her feet, saw herself before mid-day installed in the

lodging of a roving adventurer, as his avowed and public mistress!

Of her maid Sophia the lovely girl could give no account. While Chrysopulo continued in hopes of seeing the affair hushed up, he abstained from rousing the anger of this fiend, by expressing his suspicions: but the moment Euphrosyne herself had made public her adventure, Sophia, no longer feeling safe in the family, had disappeared: nor had she since been heard of;—but her louring fate was the least of my cares.

The foremost at present was the payment of the sums I had won. The addition to my establishment permitted me not to be unmindful of my interests. As soon therefore as I had said and performed whatever seemed most calculated to dispel Euphrosyne's settled gloom, I immediately walked to the meeting place of our society, and found its members in council assembled.

My first salutation was a demand upon each: but, to my unutterable dismay, the first answer was a loud and universal burst of laughter at my presumption. As soon as this peal of merriment had subsided a little, I was told that I might think myself well off in having nothing to pay instead of to receive; and, on demanding a further explanation, I learnt that the infernal Sophia had been beforehand with me, and, the instant she left the house of

Chrysopulo, had gone round to all my companions, in the first place indeed to inform them of my success with Euphrosyne, but, in the next, to comfort them with the assurance that neither my vanity nor my fortune could derive any advantage from my triumph, as it had only been the consequence of my fair one's prior frailties,—of those frailties which my confidant had solemnly sworn to me never to divulge. Every person present therefore immediately called out "a drawn wager!" and I was deemed disqualified from claiming a single para!

What could I do with a bad cause, and a parcel of fellows each to the full as sturdy as myself? Only this: to renounce with a good grace what I clearly saw I should never obtain, and to join in the laugh at my own impudence; "of which," I observed, "it was worth while at any rate to try the effect."

But tolerably as I had contrived to preserve my good humour with my strapping companions, the case became different when, returning to Euphrosyne, I met Sophia coming at full speed, to receive from those who had just mocked me the reward of her treachery.

Great as was the disappointment experienced in my purse, it seemed nothing to the wound inflicted on my pride. The fate of a lovely female had been connected with mine by links even more indissoluble than those of matrimony, since a divorce could not restore her to her home,—and this partner of

my life had been branded with infamy;—and by her in whom she had most confided!—The insulting epithets still rung in my ear, which had been showered on my mistress through the spite of the infernal Sophia.

So conscious indeed was this wicked girl of her iniquity, that, far from seeming to harbour any thoughts of enforcing her still unsettled claims on her first employer, the moment I appeared in her sight she tried to make her escape,—but it was too late!

"Wretch!" cried I, "thus then you have performed your promise. Now behold in what way I perform mine!" And hereupon I seized her by the wrist, and retorting upon her, in the midst of the gaping crowd, every disgraceful epithet which her malignancy had drawn down upon Euphrosyne, I terrified the vile woman unto fainting, and then left her to recover in the filth of Smyrna's foulest kennel! Thanks to this cool immersion she tarried not to revive; but no sooner did the fury think herself safe from my wrath, than, setting up a hellish laugh, "Wipe clean your Euphrosyne," cried she, "ere you bespatter others with the dirt which you have gained!" and then walked off with threatening gesture,—alternately wishing me joy of my prize, and auguring me the reward of my guilt. Heated as I was with passion, her curses made my blood run cold, and in return I would have chilled for

ever the noisome tide in her own viper veins—but with a home thrust of my dagger, had I not been prevented that time, by the mob, from crushing the reptile!

But its venomed bite left a print in my heart which no power could efface! To fail in all my schemes both of profit and of pride; to be burthened with the whole weight of my mistress's existence, while bereft of all esteem for her character; to feel myself the victim of her deceit or the sport of her caprice, when her real tenderness had already been prostituted;—and more than that, to find the shame which I had hoped to bury in the inmost recesses of my own bosom, divulged to all the world; to be pointed at with derision by those very companions over whom I had made sure to triumph—were tortures beyond my strength to bear; or at least, to bear alone; and the embers of affection for my new inmate, still glowing in my breast when I last left my home, seemed all extinguished ere I again crossed my threshold. If however I only returned to my abode with the determination of making my guest a partaker in all the sufferings drawn down by her last insane act upon myself, it was also with the full intent to keep the cause of my behaviour locked for ever within my own swelling heart! Why indeed dwell without necessity upon the painful thoughts of an infamy, of which I was unable to bring the proof, and despaired of extorting the confession!

Under her former playfulness of manner Euphrosyne had always concealed great decision of character. She had shrunk from going home to a husband or from staying with friends, whose reproach she must fear, or whose forbearance endure. Me alone she had considered as accountable for whatever home and felicity my offence had deprived her of elsewhere; and to me she had come for refuge, as to the only person who still owed her protection: but she had come oppressed with the sense of her dishonour; she had come with such deep anguish at the heart, that, had the fruitfulness of her imagination still broke forth amid her glowing shame into the smallest bud of sprightliness or fancy, she would have thought it a duty to crush the tender blossoms, as weeds whose rank luxuriance ill became her fallen state. Nothing but the most unremitting tenderness on my part could in some degree have revived her drooping spirits.

But when, after my excursion and the act of justice on Sophia in which it ended, I re-appeared before the still trembling Euphrosyne, she saw too soon that that cordial of the heart must not be expected. One look she cast upon my countenance, as I sat down in silence, sufficed to inform her of my total change of sentiments;—and the responsive look by which it was met, tore for ever from her breast the last seeds of hope and confidence. Like the wounded snail she shrunk within herself, and thenceforth,

cloaked in unceasing sadness, never more expanded to the sunshine of joy. With her buoyancy of spirits she seemed even to lose all her quickness of intellect, nay all her readiness of speech: so that, not only fearing to embark with her in serious conversation, but even finding no response in her mind to lighter topics, I at last began to nauseate her seeming torpor and dulness, and to roam abroad even more frequently than before a partner of my fate remained at home, to count the tedious hours of my absence; while she—poor miserable creature—dreading the sneers of an unfeeling world, passed her time under my roof in dismal and heart-breaking solitude.

Had the most patient endurance of the most intemperate sallies been able to soothe my disappointment and to soften my hardness, Euphrosyne's angelic sweetness must at last have conquered: but in my jaundiced eye her resignation only tended to strengthen the conviction of her shame: and I saw in her forbearance nothing but the consequence of her debasement, and the consciousness of her guilt. "Did her heart," thought I, "bear witness to a purity on which my audacity dared first to cast a blemish, she could not remain thus tame, thus spiritless, under such an aggravation of my wrongs; and either she would be the first to quit my merciless roof, or at least she would not so fearfully avoid giving me even the most unfounded pretence for

denying her its shelter.—She must merit her sufferings, to bear them so meekly !"

Hence, even when moved to real pity by gentleness so enduring, I seldom relented in my apparent sternness. In order to conquer or at least to conceal sentiments which I considered as effects only of weakness, I even forced myself on these occasions to increased severity. Unable to go the length of parting from a friendless outcast, even though—conformable to her own terms—the continuance of my love was to have given the measure of her stay, I almost banished myself entirely from my own home, and plunged more headlong than ever into extravagance and dissipation. Unto this period I had quaffed my wine, to enjoy its flavour: I now drank, to drive away my senses. Unto this period I had gamed to beguile an idle hour: I now played to produce in my spirits a brief intoxication. I stayed out while I was able to renew my stake, and only returned home when utterly exhausted by my losses. Nay, when Euphrosyne, after sitting up alone all night, saw me return—pale and feverish—in the broad glare of the next morning, it was often only to be pursued by all the spleen collected during my nocturnal excesses. Yet she tarried on: for to me she had sacrificed her all; and though in me she found nothing but a thorn, yet to that thorn she clung, as to that on which alone now hung her whole existence!

Euphrosyne was wont to keep in readiness for me a hot cup of coffee, when I came in from my nightly revels. After gambling it served as a restorative; but after drinking it was the only thing capable of allaying the sort of temporary madness, with which wine always affected my irritable brain. One morning, when alternate losses at dice and libations to Bacchus had sent me home half frantic, instead of finding my mistress as usual all alacrity to minister the reviving draft, to chafe my throbbing temples, and to perform what other soothing offices her awe of me permitted, I found her lying on the floor in a swoon. I only thought her asleep; but, on attempting to lift her up, her features were bruised and her face besmeared with blood. Unnerved by excess and shaking with agitation, my arm however was wholly unable to support even her light weight, and I let her drop again. She thought I did so on purpose, for, raising her head with great effort, she fixed on my countenance her haggard tearless eyes, and, clasping her hands together, for the first time vented her anguish in audible words. "I had been warned," she cried, with half stifled emotion.

"How?" said I.

"That morning," answered she, "when unexpectedly you appeared among us in the meadow, you were scarcely out of sight when the cause of your coming was discussed. We agreed—foolish girls

as we were—that chance alone had not brought you to that place, and drew lots to find out where lurked the secret attraction. I got the prize, if prize it could be called! A friend some years older than myself observing my emotion, 'Euphrosyne,' she whispered, 'if you care not for that stanger, frolic with him as you like; but, if ever he should gain your affections, O! avoid him like a pestilence. From the moment that he knows himself the master of your heart, he will treat it as wayward children do their toys; he will not rest until he has broken it.'

"This was but the first warning, and only given by a human voice," continued my mistress: "A higher admonition came straight from heaven! You know the marble image found in our field, which now adorns our garden. Once, they say, it was flesh and blood,—a hapless maiden like myself; but alas, less susceptible, and therefore turned into stone. On the night of your outrage, as I rose from my prayer—from the prayer which at that time I neither neglected, nor felt afraid to utter—a deep hollow moan issued from its snowy bosom! Another and a louder shriek was heard when I spoke to Argyropoli; and one still more dismal than the former rent the air, when I left my kinsman's roof to fly to your arms!"

"And warned even by an insensible stone," I cried, "you would not see the precipice?"

"Ah!" exclaimed Euphrosyne, "reproach me

with any thing but my love. It was that which, in spite of every circumstance that should have opened my eyes, still kept me blind."

"Your love," cried I, "neither merits my reproach, nor yet calls for my praise. It depends not on ourselves to withhold our affections, as it depends not on us to renovate a worn-out passion."

"Is it then true," cried Euphrosyne, "that you love me no more?"

"Has not that question been answered already?" said I, peevishly: "but you will not understand, unless all is spoken!"

At these words Euphrosyne put her hands to her ears, as if fearing to hear her formal dismission; and immediately ran to shut herself in her adjoining chamber. I left the wayward girl to the solitude she sought, and, unable to obtain any refreshment at home, immediately went out again. Exhausted with watching, sleep overcame me in the coffee-house where I had sought my breakfast, and, as soon as I felt somewhat recruited by its welcome intrusion, a detachment of our party carried me away by force, to make me woo afresh fickle fortune at the gaming-table. Within the irresistible influence of its magic circle I stayed, and played, and drank, and slept—and played, and drank, and slept again—till, reeling out in the dark to go home, I fell from the steps, sprained my ankle, cut my face, and lay for a time senseless on the pavement. Car-

ried in again as soon as discovered in this plight, it became my fate to be tied by the leg in the very gambling room, where the hazardous shake of the elbow had already kept me spell-bound so long.

I was so far an economist of time, as always to devote that of forced confinement to the irksome business of reflection; and I had a great deal of that sort of occupation accumulating on my hands, to employ my present leisure. The unconcern of my pretended friends on seeing me suffer, very soon made me draw unfavourable comparisons of their sentiments with those of Euphrosyne. Granting that she had been too susceptible before she knew me, how patient, how penitent, how devoted had she shown herself ever since! Yet how cruel the return I had made, and how deep the last wound I had inflicted!

The thought grew so irksome, that, not daring to send for my mistress among a set of scoffers, and yet impatient to make her amends, I crept, as soon as the dawn again arose, off my couch, stole away, and limped home.

When I knocked at my door, no one answered from within. Louder I therefore knocked and louder; but with no better success. At last my heart sunk within me, and my knees began to totter. Euphrosyne never stirred out:—could she ——? I dreaded to know the truth, and yet I was near going mad with the delay. She might be ill,

and unable to come down, though not yet beyond the reach of succour, or the comfort of kindness! It was possible she heard me, and had not strength to answer or to let me in. Timely assistance still perhaps might save her: even tardy tenderness, though shown too late to arrest her fleeting soul, might still at least allay the bitterness of its departure. A word, a look of sympathy might solace her last moments, and waft her spirit on lighter wings to heaven!

Frantic with impatience, I endeavoured to break open the sullen door, but could only curse its perverse steadiness in doing its duty. In despair at the delay, I was going for an axe to hew it from its hinges, when an old deaf neighbour, who began to suspect she heard a noise, came down half dressed to lend her assistance. She employed nearly as much time before she let herself out, as I had lost in trying to get in. At last, however, her feeble efforts were crowned with success. Forth she came, and put on her spectacles to scrutinise my person. A deliberate survey having satisfied her respecting my identity, she thrust her withered arm deep in her ample pocket, and drew out fifty things which neither of us wanted, before she ended by producing the key of my lodging, which she put into my hands with a low curtesy, as having been left in her care by the lady who had taken her departure.

"Thank God!—I have not killed her!" was my

first exclamation. "That weight at least is off my burthened mind!" and as soon as I had sufficiently recovered my breath, I inquired of the old woman the time and circumstances of Euphrosyne's disappearance:—what conveyance had taken her away; in what direction she went; and above all, what message she had left?

These were useless queries, and the frequent repetition of them for the purpose of being understood, a fruitless expenditure of breath. It took me half an hour to make my neighbour hear me: and when I succeeded at last, so near was she to dotage, that I could make nothing of her answers. On my asking as the least perplexing question, how long the key had been in the old goody's possession, she could only say, "ever since it had been given her."

Despairing of more explicit intelligence outside my threshold, I went in, and in three strides reached the top of the stairs, and my own empty room. From that I ran into the next, equally empty and desolate; looked upon every table and shelf, under every seat and cushion, in every box and drawer, and behind every chest and wardrobe. My hopes were to find some letter, some note, some scrap of paper, written, if not in kindness, at least in anger, to inform me which way my poor girl had fled: but I looked in vain; there was nothing!

I possessed no clue whatever to a probable solu-

tion of my doubts; I could form no opinion on the strange event; I sat down in mute amazement, trying to think, and yet finding no point on which to fix my thoughts. At last, as my eyes continued to wander in total vacancy round the room, they fell upon some writing which assuredly had not been intended to court my sight; for it run along the skirting of the wainscot, and could only have been written by Euphrosyne, with her pencil, as she lay on the ground. I stooped down to read, and only found some broken sentences, probably traced by my mistress when she left me the last time to seek refuge in solitude. The sense seemed addressed to herself more than to her destroyer, and the words were mostly effaced:—thus ran the few legible lines.

"At last he has spoken plainly!—I shall go—no matter where!—Let him rejoice. On boasting of his triumphs over unsuspecting innocence, he may now add—'I have ruined Euphrosyne!'—and be proud to think a greater fall from purity to corruption, from honour to infamy, and from happiness to misery, was never achieved by human hands!" Then followed a string of half obliterated words, among which all I could make out was an invocation to the Almighty, not to withhold from me its blessings, nor to visit on Selim poor Euphrosyne's wrongs! A thousand daggers seemed, on reading this sentence, to pierce my heart at once.

Every thing remained as I had left it, except Euphrosyne alone! She had taken nothing with her; for she had nothing to take:—the last articles of her apparel, worth any money, had been sold to supply her necessities, or rather my extravagance.

A film now all at once dropped from before my eyes, and my former behaviour presented itself to me in a totally new light. Though I might still believe,—and indeed now most anxiously wished to believe, for the relief of my goaded conscience, —that Euphrosyne had not at all times been equally watchful of that perfect purity she boasted; that in some unguarded moment the inexperience of early youth had suffered her virtue to contract a slight speck; that the tale so boldly told by her waiting-woman was not wholly without foundation: yet, on contemplating her conduct on that eventful day when she might for ever have wrapped every former stain in the ample impenetrability of the nuptial veil, but, with a magnanimous disdain of all meanness or subterfuge, resigned herself to poverty, persecution, and disgrace, for the sake of rigid righteousness, I could not doubt that already at that period at least the mental corruption, the taint of the soul (if ever it had existed), had been in the eye of Supreme mercy washed away by repentance, and had left the whole crime of plunging a noble creature into inextricable ruin chargeable to my account alone!

And supposing that even the tale of Euphrosyne's early frailty itself,—that only sheet anchor of my conscience amid a sea of distracting doubts—should after all turn out a mere fabrication, as seemed from Sophia's unprincipled conduct a thing not impossible: supposing the whole first chapter of Euphrosyne's short history should have been nothing but a scene of artless innocence; nay, supposing that the thoughtless girl should really have been ignorant even of the assignation whence arose all her sorrows; supposing that when she first came in agony to my abode, only to avoid a public expulsion from her own, she should have had nothing with which to reproach her own heart, but some latent sparks of love for her despoiler; supposing I thus had only plunged into everlasting perdition a being, throughout the whole of her once happy career as unexceptionable in conduct as she had been enviable in circumstances; and that, for no purpose but to end her race of undeserved sufferings by turning her out of doors, and forcing her upon the wide world without a friend, a relation, or a home,—and at a time too when her situation demanded more than ordinary tenderness!——The thought was too dreadful even for me to bear: it racked me to the soul; and what rendered my remorse doubly pungent, love itself, that love which I had thought long annihilated, seemed to re-enter at the rents torn in my heart by pity. A thousand

excellencies in my mistress, before unheeded, now flashed upon my mind. From the embers of a more sensual flame, extinguished almost as soon as raised, now burst forth a brighter intellectual blaze never before experienced; as from a body in dissolution arise flames of pure ethereal fire.

Sorrow, self-reproach, and uncertainty seemed for a while to deprive me of all power of exertion; but the moment a ray of hope roused me from motionless dismay into fresh activity, I ran frantic all over Smyrna in search of my lost mistress. I abruptly stopped in the street every person, high or low, male or female, whom I thought likely to have witnessed her escape; I forcibly invaded every house in which I fancied she might be concealed. No place capable of harbouring any thing in the human shape, and which I dared investigate, did I leave unexplored. Of the individuals assailed by my inquiries some laughed, some took offence, some reproached me for my inconsistency, and some supposed me to be a maniac broke loose from his confinement. I minded not their surprise or their scoffing, but continued my pursuit while I had strength. Alas! I continued it in vain. No Euphrosyne could I find!

Reluctantly I now again turned me to the abhorred Sophia, to assist me in my labour. The wretch had not only deceived me, betrayed my Euphrosyne, and, by divulging all she ought to

have concealed, involved the one in ruin and the other in disgrace; she had even, as if on purpose daily to enjoy the shame cast on Chrysopulo's house, hired a lodging directly opposite his gate: but vast failings are overlooked in those whose aid we want. I hied me to the ex-suivante full of conciliatory speeches: she met them with assurances of equal contrition, and expressed so much regret for her indiscretion, so much compassion for Euphrosyne, and so much sympathy with me, that, in view of the readiness she showed to second my search, all was or appeared to be forgiven. We shook hands; I made fresh promises, and Sophia entered upon fresh services.

My resolution this time was formed, and will be allowed to have been unexceptionable. The instant fortune crowned our united labours, Euphrosyne was to receive the meed of her long and patient sufferings, or at least, the offer of every reparation which I could make for my manifold offences. Not only I meant immediately to proclaim her my honoured, my wedded, my inseparable wife; but, what to some might seem more difficult or more problematical, I intended to become myself the best and most faithful of husbands.

Fate allowed me full time to study the requisites of that new character. Our twofold search did not turn out more successful than had done before my single-handed endeavours:—by no means, however,

for want of activity in Sophia. Like Satan her master, she seemed endowed with the gift of ubiquity. Not a day passed that she did not come to me with a long account of the places she had visited, and of those she meant to visit; of the hopes she had been disappointed of in one quarter, and of the expectations she entertained in another; of her glimpses here, and of her surmises there. So often did she drag me after her through every street and lane of Smyrna, that my friends pretended to think that she had herself stepped into Euphrosyne's place, and, when the city had been ransacked through to the last garret and cellar, we extended our search to every village and hamlet, within ten or fifteen miles round.

When at last I had explored every district within the Mootsellimlik of Ismir, until I no longer could think of any place unsearched, and found nothing left to do but to sit down in contented ignorance, or rather in calm despair, there flew in at my open window, one evening, a small silken bag, flung by an invisible hand and conveying a gold ring. It was one which I had put on Euphrosyne's finger, immediately after the memorable farewell visit of her kind-hearted friends, and ere I called upon my companions to claim my bets. On the slip of paper twisted round the ring appeared the following words. "Cease a pursuit, as vain as it is thankless; nor seek any longer to disturb the peace of Eu-

phrosyne, now cured of a worthless passion; now at rest from her grief in more merciful hands. The ring you once gave her in proof of your love, reverts to you in sign that she never more can accept your tardy, your unavailing tenderness."

These words, evidently written by the same hand which had originally pointed Euphrosyne out to me as a desirable conquest, seemed at last fully to explain her motives for leaving me, or at least her conduct since her disappearance. Nothing could be clearer, in my opinion, than that the artful schemer who had first instigated me to seduce the lovely girl, had availed himself of my forced absence from home, to take her off my hands. I had been a mere tool to some more designing member of our nefarious brotherhood.

It might, however, in one sense, be called considerate thus at last to relieve me from all further anxiety and trouble; and nothing but the inherent perverseness of human nature could have changed, as it did, the cold indifference with which I had treated my mistress while she depended wholly upon my affection, into the warmth which her image rekindled in my heart, the moment I supposed her comforted by another: but this new ardour, conceived too late, I kept to myself; and judging that other individual now preferred to be—though unknown—frequently in my company, I took uncommon pains to evince by my mirth my gratitude for his

proceedings. Lest he should have any doubt on this subject, not a day passed without my joining some festive party in excursions to Boornabad, to Sedi-keui, and other places; and by these means I recovered at last in reality the lightness of heart which I affected; and that to such a degree as almost to grow frightened at my own unusual hilarity, and to apprehend it might forebode some new impending sorrow.

An excursion had often been projected, and as often put off, to a village a few miles from Smyrna, celebrated for the beauty of its situation. At last the party took place. We were sitting, half a dozen thoughtless souls, under the cool shade of a locust tree. I had taken up a lyre, laid down by one of my companions, and was just going to try my long neglected skill in a Greek ballad which I used to sing to Helena, when a peasant brought me a note of a suspicious appearance.

Determined this time to know the author of this single-handed correspondence, I began by laying hold of its conveyer. The messenger seemed the quintessence of stupidity: my catechising could draw nothing from him, except that the billet had been committed to his care three miles off by a female hidden in her veil, come from a distance, and who immediately again took herself off. All that the bearer could or would say ending there, I turned me to the epistle.

It ran thus:

"Did you ever hear of a Greek merchant whose name was Sozimato? Once he excelled Chrysopulo himself in riches, in ambition, and in sway; but fortune turned fickle. Chrysopulo saw new thousands press upon his former thousands, and Sozimato ended a bankrupt. The match contracted between Chrysopulo's son and Sozimato's daughter now of course was cancelled; for between the rich and the poor no engagement could subsist. To sharpen the sting of the insult, the humble daughter of the bankrupt was offered a servant's place in Chrysopulo's family: for the upstarts exulted in treading on the neck of the fallen! The offer of arrogance was however accepted, and the taunts of insolence were borne without a complaint. A disease for which there was no cure carried off Chrysopulo's infant son; and Euphrosyne,—a distant relation—became the adopted daughter. She too was rendered the victim of just revenge. A set of lawless young men had established a society for the purpose of ruining the peace of sober families. One member of this noble fraternity was spoken of in the town as more bold and unprincipled than the rest: he was singled out to cast dishonour on Chrysopulo's house, and to sow misery among its members; and at last, through his instrumentality, —for he was but a tool—that Euphrosyne, most unjustly aspersed in her unsullied virtue, became

the kept mistress of a needy adventurer. Foul disgrace, conjured up from all quarters, thus cast its cloud over Chrysopulo's name.

"Here the work of vengeance might have ended, had not the adventurer too dared to treat with indignity the daughter of Sozimato. It was for this she joined in the search after his departed mistress; it was for this she permitted not the unfortunate girl to be found: it was for this she prevented her from being solaced by her lover's returning tenderness, even when she lay totally destitute in a miserable garret, at the last period of her long protracted labour; and it was for this, finally, that she prepared the infidel wretch a world of endless pangs, by plying his hapless mistress with false accounts of his unrelenting barbarity, unto the last day of her hapless existence!

"Great, no doubt, were the difficulties in preventing a meeting between the repentant sinner and his innocent victim. One day he penetrated into the very abode where she lay writhing under every agony of body and of mind. A ragged curtain alone kept her from his sight, and a single cry unstifled must have thrown him in her arms! Watchfulness, however, triumphed: the adventurer turned back in ignorance; and his Euphrosyne saw him no more. She was delivered, unaided by any one but the person who had served, had sold her, and now was labouring that she might be sainted. Yet

did the angel on earth try to do what she could for her adored Selim's child. Seeing it ready to perish for want of sustenance, she resolved to save her infant's life by completing her own shame. Ere however the sacrifice could be accomplished, she expired,—expired among strangers, pronouncing Selim's name! The more merciful hands in which this miserable man read that his mistress was at rest, were those of her Maker: the ring he received had been taken from her corpse already cold; and the sole worker of all this woe, I scarcely need add, was the injured and now satisfied Sophia."

I do not know how I was able to finish the perusal of this letter, except from a sort of stupor which for a moment kept all my faculties, save that of mere perception, suspended. The first word however which one of our party uttered, broke the fascination, set loose my entranced senses, and with them all the demons of hell which had been gathering all the while in my bosom. What species of violence I committed in breaking away from the convivial scene to pursue the detestable Sophia, is wholly beyond my knowledge. I neither saw, nor heard, nor thought, until I reached Smyrna.

Sophia knew me too well to wait my return. Ere I received her note she had left that place for ever: nor could I trace her flight. It was only some time after, when, hopeless of discovering her abode, I had committed to Heaven the care of her punish-

ment, that in the least likely of places I met the embodied fury. She again tried to avoid me—again commenced the race of conscious guilt; but this time to no purpose. Her crime was one of those, which, more atrocious than many which justice never spares, yet mock its shackled arm. I therefore took into my own hands a punishment too long delayed: nor was it the more lenient from that circumstance.

This unlooked-for event seemed to afford me some refreshment. For a while I felt the thirst of my soul assuaged, the raging fever of my blood somewhat allayed: but the cessation of pain was only transient. The image of Euphrosyne expiring on a bed of wretchedness, and in the belief that I was hailing the hour of her departure at the very time when I would have given my own life to have found the poor sufferer—when I only prayed to Heaven for leave to take her back, to cherish her in my now softened bosom, and to make her taste at last, ere yet too late, of happiness—soon began to haunt me incessantly; and too truly I found that the fury Sophia had insinuated into my heart a canker, which I was destined to carry to the grave!

CHAPTER IV.

The painful chapter is concluded;—that chapter of my history to which I looked forward with dismay, and which I hurried over with shame and sorrow. Frequently, during the dreary course of the last pages, has my hand felt as if arrested, and my pen ready to drop from my fingers: but I wished to offer in the faithful narrative of my injustice, the only sacrifice in my power to the memory of my Euphrosyne; and, having performed this severe but wholesome penance, I seem to breathe somewhat more freely, and to proceed on the sequel of my narrative with less reluctance. Too forcibly however do I feel that the film which obscured my judgment during the sad events of which I have made a full confession, will be admitted with the unimpassioned reader as a feeble palliation only of my offences, and that even my bitter repentance itself will scarcely have the power of averting so deep an abhorrence of my fault, as must cast a blasting influence over the whole sequel of my tale.

After learning the fate of my unfortunate mistress, there still remained one other task of fearful anxiety to be performed; namely, to ascertain that

of my not less pitiable child. I knew not whether the babe had followed its mother to the grave, or was still alive to share its father's misery: but no Sophia any longer intervening between me and the object of my search, it was soon successful. I discovered the poor people under whose humble roof my Euphrosyne had breathed her last; I found in their arms a lovely infant depending on charity for its support, and learnt that the smiling babe was my own. External proof was not requisite to confirm the assertions of its fosterfather: too brightly shone in the cherub's eye the heaven of its mother's looks,—that heaven in which, but for my own waywardness, I might have lived for ever blessed! Alexis had her radiant brow, her pouting lip, her dimpled chin. The very rag which enveloped the poor infant was a relic of Euphrosyne's last earthly vestment; once, in her days of splendour, a rich tissue of purple and gold,—now so tarnished, so stripped of its original lustre, that it seemed to have continued to the last the faithful emblem of her whose graceful limbs it had encircled until they waxed cold in death.

I pressed my child to my bosom, to my lips, to my eyes. Hurt by the roughness of my face, perhaps annoyed by the copious flowing of my tears, the poor babe began to cry. So full of terror were its looks, one might have fancied it had recognised its till now unfeeling father: I therefore reluctantly

laid it down again, and discontinued my unwelcome endearments: but fearful lest gratuitous care might have less merit in the execution than in the design, I told the poor people I should rid them of the burthen, and take my child away. They turned pale at the intelligence, and though rewarded to the full extent of my scanty means, wept on resigning my Alexis into other hands. What little sum I was able to raise by the sale of my remaining trinkets, I deposited for his maintenance with the most trustworthy people whom my search could discover; and then began to consider how I should live myself. The Turkish law, it is true, grants not the vindictive pleasure of shutting up for life a disabled debtor, nor punishes the man who has got into debt, by preventing him from ever getting out of his creditor's books again; but still in Turkey, as elsewhere, one may starve even out of gaol.

There were some who would have had me inform my friend Spiridion of my distress: but I could not bear to ask a favour from one to whom I could make no return. "Far better were it," thought I, "to be indebted for my subsistence to my own bravery, than to the reluctant compassion of others. Weary of life, and anxious only to banish reflection, I meditated joining some of those bold members of society who, having occupied an abandoned district, imitate the sovereigns of the globe, and tax the traveller for trespassing on their

domain. Theirs was the employment—doubtless noble in itself—of transferring to the needy the superfluities of the affluent; and who could plead more pinching wants than a father burthened with the necessities of a motherless babe, and forced to fight for subsistence or to see his infant starve? Nor did in Turkey the profession of a bandit lack its respectability. A high-minded man might embrace the career of the haïdoot without blushing: while most busily employed in reaping its benefits, he still recognised certain principles of honour; and when tired of its perils, he found no obstacle—if fortunate enough never to have been caught in the fact—to laying down his dangerous trade unmolested, boasting of his past exploits, and seeking some safer and less precarious employment, on a par with such among his fellow-citizens as had, in the capacity of magistrates or rulers, pursued the same profession more unostentatiously. Sick at heart and ruined in purse, I saw in a robber's life the only remedy for both diseases. Besides, the scheme, if well managed, might be rendered preparatory to another which I had secretly cherished ever since the commencement of my embarrassments. At Bagdad was seated on the throne of the ancient Kaliphs a Pasha more resembling an independent sovereign than a Sultan's representative. Himself the disposer of sundry lesser pashaliks, his wide domain and constant

warfare with his manifold neighbours offered to the soldier of fortune a fertile field for promotion. I wished to try his service. Some of the principal troops of banditti that grace the Turkish empire lined the various roads to his capital; and I might, in my way to that new theatre of my ambition, either occasionally join their numerous marauding parties, or, sportsman-like, take my gun, and singly arrest the flight of some passing traveller, to solace the tediousness or supply the necessities of my journey.

Nobler game, however, was for a moment near attracting me to more distant realms, where rulers themselves were despoiled, and kings hunted down. An Italian had dropped as if from the clouds at Smyrna, who in appearance only wooed the Muses, but in reality belonged to the sect of political propagandists, about that time disseminated all the world over, to preach emancipation from every bondage, natural, civil, and religious. The disturbance of my mind, and the distress of my situation, could not remain long concealed from the keen-eyed improvvisatore, and he resolved to make them subservient to his secret purposes.

"Listen," he would say in a prophetic tone—whenever he found or could make room for a set speech: "The time is at hand when all the tottering monuments of ignorance, credulity, and superstition, no longer protected by the foolish awe which

they formerly inspired, shall strew the earth with their wrecks! Every where the young shoots of reason and liberty, starting from between the rents and crevices of the worn-out fabrics of feudalism, are becoming too vigorous any longer to be checked: they soon will burst asunder the baseless edifices of self-interest and prejudice, which have so long impeded their growth. Religious inquisition, judicial torture, monastic seclusion, tyranny, oppression, fanaticism, and all the other relics of barbarism, are to be driven from the globe. Annihilation awaits the whole code of hereditary rights, exclusive privileges, and mortifying distinctions, only derived by men born equal, from mouldering ancestors and musty parchments. Soon shall armorial bearings, empty titles, and frivolous orders, cease to insult man's understanding. Whatever appeared great only through the mist of error; whatever was magnified into importance only through the medium of prejudice, shall have its deceitful size detected by the torch of reason, and shall then be hurled back into its pristine insignificance. Sceptred imbecility, nodding on its crazy thrones, shall ere long be laid prostrate in the dust; and subjects, making sovereigns their footstools, shall assert man's primeval equality, by mounting upon their tyrants' necks into their tyrants' places. Already in more than one realm does the hallowed work of regeneration advance with rapid strides: already throughout Gallia

streams day and night the blood of victims: already dungeons forced open, castles levelled with the ground, and feudal records committed to the flames, mark the approach of a happier era; while one monarch shot in the midst of his court, and another dragged to the scaffold by his own subjects, are but the first fruits offered up at the new-raised shrine of liberty, whose temple must some day encompass the whole universe. You then who here pine in an inglorious sloth, awake from your long slumber, emancipate your oppressed spirits, and join the noble cause. Enlist among the uprising liberators of mankind. Leave this worn-out empire of despotism and slavery, this den of tigers doomed to speedy destruction; and seek on the yellow banks of the Seine the blessed dawn of a fast spreading revolution. Hasten to that busy capital of all nations, where from all quarters of the globe flock the lovers of liberty and the haters of kings, and meet with welcome and with denizenship all who, mastered by their liberal feelings, yearn to establish sword in hand universal philanthropy. Your part on this grand theatre already is marked out for you. All that you have to do is to present yourself in the august assembly of the great nation, as the representative of oppressed and mourning Greece. Be the eloquent, the pathetic organ of its ardent wish to share in the benefits which France confers on the world. Tell of the myriads that in the land of the

Cimons and the Miltiadeses lift up to her their imploring hands. Your person is showy, your lungs are potent, your speech untrammelled by troublesome timidity, and, with a dress designed by the painter David (I would advise a Grecian tunic) and a few attitudes of uncontrollable emotion imitated from the sublime Talma, it will be your own fault if, in the convention, you are not hailed as the worthy descendant of Harmodius and Aristogiton!"

This rhapsody made me laugh; but I thought the subject serious. In the midst of all my grief, it interested my vanity, and I inquired the shortest way to Paris. We agreed that as soon as arrived on European ground, Cirico (the poet) should in view of his superior local knowledge act as my *avant courier*. Unfortunately his impatience marred the project. Desirous of giving a specimen of his talent, he improvvised himself away from Smyrna ere I had the least intimation of his departure. In his hurry he left his bill unpaid, and took away his landlord's silver spoons. This inadvertency cast a shade upon his doctrine. I bade mourning Greece wipe away her tears without me, and, instead of journeying in behalf of universal liberty to Paris, resumed the plan of my predatory expedition to Bagdad.

In conformity to the nature of my views, I set out lightly provisioned but heavily armed, and the first stage of my journey witnessed the first trial of

my skill. At a hamlet where travellers sometimes stop to refresh, a caravan of Franks was waiting for the cool of the evening to proceed in greater comfort. Only come from Sedi-keui, and only intending to visit Ephesus—or rather the spot once adorned by that city—these dilettanti in ruins had provided no guard. I proposed to two or three loiterers whom I picked up by the way, to teach them more prudence. Neither I nor they, we agreed, would commit a serious robbery: but it was only a frolic; and we swore to each other faithfully to restore what we took, unless we thought it very particularly worth keeping.

A little circuit and a quicker pace brought us first to a defile, which very soon after and just at dusk our travellers also entered. Their attendants were suffered to pass on; but we could not help interrupting a very earnest discussion in which the more tardy masters were engaged:—it was only for the purpose of demanding their money. This request they readily enough complied with; and I could not have found the smallest pretence for complaining of their backwardness, even if the elder of the two had forborne from bestowing with his well filled purse the benefit of a lecture.

But for this latter circumstance the somewhat singular travelling garb of the worthy gentleman who took this opportunity of improving my morality would eternally have kept concealed from my

knowledge, that I had the honour of stripping the Baron H——, Swedish consul-general at Smyrna, and my own much respected acquaintance. Residing in the summer season at Sedi-keui, he had insisted on accompanying his young friend—an eastern tourist—on this antiquarian excursion; and I was the first object, not quite two thousand years old, which had probably engaged their attention. It was impossible to keep the money of a man whose good fare I had more than once enjoyed; wherefore, falling at the consul's feet: "Take back your purse!" cried I; "it would bring me ill fortune; and I have had enough already!"

At these words H—— stared on me in mute astonishment, until, convinced that his senses did not deceive him, he at last exclaimed with a loud groan, "Selim Aga, for heaven's sake is it you?"

"It is," answered I.

"And what," resumed the consul, "can have brought you to this?"

I blushed; and seeing my companions had chosen to decamp during the parley, "We are alone," said I; "let me go on with you to your next halting-place, and there you shall hear all."

The proposal was accepted, and the distance compassed in five or six hours—for my travellers kept not in other matters pace with their tongues. By a little brook, under the already acceptable shade of an old plane-tree, we sat down an hour after

sunrise, and I told a not very exhilarating story. At its conclusion I again intreated the consul to take back his purse; but to this request he turned a deaf ear. He had not much liked, he owned, to have his viaticum forcibly taken from him; but he now earnestly begged I might think it worthy my acceptance.

"To what purpose?" exclaimed I.—"My object was to try my hand at a highway robbery, more for the sake of the act than the plunder. The things which money may purchase I can no longer prize. Life to me has lost its sweets!"

"Subdue your passions, young man," answered H——, "it is to them you owe all your misery."

"Alas!" was my reply, "what am I to believe? Do not philosophers maintain that the passions are the only road to knowledge, to power, and to virtue? that the inert being who never has felt their influence on his own mind knows not how to guide the will of others, sees man as a machine whose movements baffle his skill, constantly miscalculates the views and conduct of his fellow creatures, and, only attempting to move men like blocks by physical force, must find a resistance which mocks his inadequate impulse. Without the passion of love would women encounter the pangs which preserve our species? without that for ruling would man endure the toil of maintaining public order amongst it? Is not the passion of avarice that which brings

in contact, for universal benefit, the industry and the produce of the most distant countries? and what but the passion for fame makes man risk health, fortune, nay life itself, for the advantages, perhaps the amusement, of generations yet unborn? Like the heat of the sun, that of the passions may strengthen a few poisons, but alone it brings forth all the sweets and healthful plants of the creation."

H—— shook his head. "It is feeling," said he, "which, like the sun's genial warmth, ripens each fairest fruit. Passions like a scorching blaze only burn them to ashes. Would you behold the effects of the former; look at my young friend here. Calm, healthful, and blooming, he is the bee that sucks the flowers of every clime, some day to bestow their honey upon his grateful countrymen. Would you know the consequence of the latter; look in the brook beside you."

I advanced my head over the glassy pool: but from its deep bosom up rose to meet my eye a countenance ghastly—a cheek so wan and feverish—that I started back with horror. I felt the reproof, bowed assent, and said no more.

To his purse, which H—— positively refused to take back, but allowed me if I liked to keep only as a loan, his companion, rich as well as romantic, now insisted on adding his mite. He tore a leaf out of his pocket-book, and with the pen and ink which he carried in a case about him, wrote a draft

on a banker at Haleb, to whom he was already known. This order he made me solemnly promise to present.

Greatly could I have wished to devote to the new friends thus strangely gained the time destined by them to the survey of Ephesus: but I feared lest my presence might be a restraint upon the freedom of their rambles, and, when Ayasolook rose in sight with its towering citadel, I blessed them, kissed the hand of the elder, embraced the younger, and went my lonely way.

As nothing happened in the sequel of my journey to answer the promises of the beginning,—as I stopped no more travellers on the road, and received no more purses for so doing, I shall be brief in the account of its adventures. Alternately pushing on by land or by sea, according as opportunities offered, I found the one irksome and the other tedious. A Turkish vessel conveyed me to Scanderoon. The cabin had been hired for a wealthy merchant's harem. Nothing so little seen, except thunder, ever made so much noise. On the least motion of the ship, all the women used to abuse the captain. The only instrument capable of restoring them to order was the husband's pipe stick: indeed it was much oftener applied to his wives' backs than to his own lips; and the whole of this good gentleman's active life seemed to be divided between a puff and a blow.

The very day I landed at Scanderoon I proceeded on to Baïlan, there to wait in a purer air a caravan of Armenians actually on their way. On the arrival of the good folks I thought I beheld, instead of the most pacific people on earth, a troop of Tartars only breathing war and bloodshed. Each man looked like a walking armoury, hung all round with every species of offensive weapon. In confidence, however, the leader of the troop desired me not to be alarmed: "they made it a rule," they said, "never to use the arms they carried."

Of this circumstance a detachment of Coordish horsemen[1], which we met a few leagues from our starting-place, seemed perfectly aware. Though not quite half our number, they no sooner saw us approach than they drew their sabres, flung a sheep's skin across the path, and civilly desired each of us to drop into it, as we passed, the moderate sum of five piastres. I took the liberty of expostulating: but my friends were so averse to acts of violence, and so anxious wherewithal for the honour of paying my share of the contribution, that I could not, either in conscience or good breeding, deny them that pleasure. Notwithstanding that these little rencontres might lead to a contrary conclusion, there are guards stationed in the narrow passages of the mountains, to protect the travellers and to awe the banditti; but they constantly make mistakes, and

inform the Coords of the approaching traveller, instead of warning the traveller of the neighbouring Coords.

The fourth and last night of our journey we stopped at Martahwan; a village of Ansariehs[2] of pleasurable notoriety among the Halebines. The owner of the hovel marked out for my lodging, however, seemed ill provided; but the piteous manner in which he apologised for the poorness of the entertainment, by informing me that his wife was dead, his daughter at the breast, and his mother in her dotage, made me hasten to relieve his mind, by stating that a mouthful of rice and a corner to lie down in were all the comforts to which I aspired. As to the conductor of our caravan, whose whole life was spent in travelling backward and forward between Haleb and Scanderoon, he had wisely contrived that his conveniences should not depend, like those of his ever changing charge, on the chances of the road. Taking advantage of the utmost latitude of the Mohammedan law, he had not only provided himself with four wives, but had distributed these between the four stations of the journey so judiciously, that, though every night on the road, he every night slept at home.

At Haleb I failed not to go—lest I might seem forgetful of the kindness shown me near Ayasolook—to the suburb of Djedaïdé, and there to pre-

sent the draft, given me by the young traveller for my trouble in waylaying him. It was addressed to an old Provençal merchant: a sort of humourist, who always appeared in a rage, never agreed with any body, contradicted himself when he found no one else to contradict, and, if a stranger to his whims incautiously fell into his opinion, took it as an affront, and demanded explanation. On my handing him the check, he alternately looked at the bill and at me, and seemed to wonder how the two came together. I tried to explain this to his satisfaction by launching out into the praises of the young traveller, and calling him quite the child of nature; but here I found I had got on the wrong scent. "Child of nature!" cried the Provençal, "no more than you, or I, or pickled olives. If he were, I should expect to be devoured by him. The human beings that are nearest to nature eat their enemies, make love to their mistresses by felling them to the ground with a club, beat out their wives' brains when they get tired of their persons, and inter with the dead mothers their living babes. Except such monsters as these, all our fellow creatures are in different degrees the children of art; the Indian and the Arab, as well as the European and the Chinese: for with reason begins art; and the first man who made use of the reasoning faculty—if it were only to scoop out a drinking

bowl, or to point a spear—for ever took leave of simple nature; and did very wisely!"

After this *tirade*, the worthy gentleman, inviting me to be seated, informed me that finding little of the resource of conversation at Aleppo, where the natives were—to use his own words—*naturellement bêtes*, and his own countrymen *passablement animaux*, he had addicted himself to philosophy *à corps perdu*:—an expression perhaps not wholly applicable, as I found him, on the contrary, to be of the sect who never lose sight of the body for a single instant, seek nothing but the useful, and only estimate things according as they can be eaten or drank. "In fact, fragrant odours, delicious music, beautiful gardens, and such like," my friend observed, "lose all their merit the moment one becomes deaf, or blind, or afflicted with a cold in the head!" He therefore—reserving all his esteem for *le solide*,—held them in great contempt, as totally unphilosophical; and, whenever they were praised in his hearing, used, shrewdly to ask: "*à quoi bon tout cela?*"

Meanwhile, dinner being announced, he jumped up, and cried out with exceeding glee: "*allons-y, car il est très philosophique de manger*:" a truth to which I so fully assented that I was invited to take my share, and for once had an opportunity of beholding a sage truly intent upon putting his doctrine in practice. Indeed he did this to such a

degree as almost to overshoot the mark, and to exceed the limits of utility: for, though at every one of the good dishes which a well trained attendant successively enumerated in a loud voice, he emphatically exclaimed; "*Eh mon Dieu, qu'est-ce que cela me fait?*" yet being wholly absorbed in the eloquent invective inspired by this variety of dainties against the pernicious art of cookery, he went on practically evincing its dangers, until I feared his philosophy might end fatally, and was going to impart my apprehension to his servant,—when luckily the same idea struck this faithful domestic. He whispered something in his master's ear: who thereupon reddened, and turning round to me, said, "*Je fais si peu attention à ce que je mange, que je suis sujet à m'oublier, et à ne pas discontinuer jusqu'à ce qu' on m'avertisse*:" in order to ensure the performance of which necessary office, the prudent Provençal had with infinite forecast granted his trusty attendant a considerable annuity;—but upon his own more philosophic life.

Dinner, dessert, coffee, and liqueurs being over, I thanked my host for his entertainment, and took my leave. "Ah!" exclaimed he, "why must I remain here to look after pistachios and tobacco, while you are going to behold the august site of ancient Babylon; that cradle of wisdom, that fountain head of gnosticism, which let man into all the secrets of the Divine emanation, and into all the mysteries of the

universal soul! No doubt you will tread with veneration its hallowed soil, kiss with rapture its sacred dust, and make an ample store of its inestimable bricks. But, no—you only go to seek the filthy gold of a Pasha!" I laughed; owned I saw more of the *utile* in a few sequins than in a whole cart-load of worn out brick-bats, with inscriptions which no living soul could understand, even though they should have belonged to the tower of Babel; begged the merchant's commands for that august place, and took my departure.

To an unphilosophical traveller Aleppo was not a disagreeable abode, though it had its inconveniences. The stranger risked being torn to pieces by the shereefs if he liked the jenissaries best, stoned by the jenissaries if he preferred the shereefs, and knocked down by both if he liked neither pre-eminently. Every day the city was disturbed by the feuds between these rival bodies. I left them to settle their differences without my assistance, and made my bargain with the kerwan-bashi of a small kafflé[3] on the eve of its departure, for my conveyance to Bagdad. The conductor of the caravan was to defray all expenses—tolls to Turks, Arabs and Turkmen included, and to go, not by the great desert, where we expected nothing but pilfering Bedoweens, pestilential winds, and clouds of parching dust, but by the longer and more agreeable circuit of Moossool, described as an uninterrupt-

ed succession of populous villages and cultivated tracts.

On the appointed day we set out. Among the party was an inquisitive prying marmoset, who could not rest until he had sifted out the business and profession of every member of the caravan. When it came to my turn to be cross-questioned, I honestly told him—but under a solemn promise of betraying me to nobody—that I was a physician, disguised as a military man to avoid the annoyance of consultations. The secret was soon buzzed about, and immediately the whole party paid court to no one but the healer of human bodies. Each individual contrived in turns some opportunity cunningly to introduce the topics of health and disease, and in a discreet way to consult me on all his complaints, past, present, and future. One Arab only of the suite was endowed with so perversely good a constitution, as not to be able to discover in himself the symptom of a single lurking ailment, and feelingly lamented his ill-luck in being obliged to forego so fine an opportunity for a cure. The first medicines I began to distribute in my own defence were mere balls of bread and soap; but I soon found the bowels of the company too refractory for so gentle a prescription. I therefore made bold to purloin some portion of a bale of ipecacuanha, directed to the missionaries at Bagdad, which I knew by the smell, and mixing it with some gunpowder, found the means to move

and to satisfy my friends. They were particular rather as to the vehemence than the mode in which the medicine acted. A man in a fever slily drank off the restorative I had prepared for one with an abscess; and one in the colic poured into his stomach the lotion intended for the leg of another who had broken his shin: but these trifles affected not my reputation. It presently grew so splendid, that in our evening halts I no longer dared to stir out of the khan where we stopped, for fear of being forcibly dragged away to feel pulses. Fortunately the crossing of the small desert, which we preferred to coasting the banks of the Tigris, enabled me to drop my assumed character, by interrupting for a while the afflux of patients. I declared I was not a physician; and immediately the complaints of my travelling companions, which they thought radically cured, all returned upon them with double force.

Making a halt between Nissabeen and Moossool, we came in contact with a party of travellers, whose route crossed our track, and who halted near our own resting-place. At first our guides and the strangers conversed together very amicably, but presently high words arose between them, and the quarrel at last became so loud and violent that I expected it to end in a pitched battle. We thought it wisest not to interfere, and contented ourselves with listening attentively. For a long while, however, none of us could make any thing of the dis-

pute, except that it was about some great personage, whom, it seems, our Arabs had not mentioned with becoming reverence. When the matter came to be explained, this personage turned out to be the devil. The strangers were Yezidees; a sect who maintain that, whether Satan be at present in or out of favour in heaven, he continues not the less to exert great sway on earth, and therefore ought to be treated with proper respect; and, as they think it wise to make friends every where—not knowing where their destiny may ultimately fix them—they judiciously divide their worship between the powers of light and of darkness. The party in question was on a pilgrimage from mount Sindjar their residence, to the tomb of Schaich Adi their patron.

Hearing all these circumstances, I immediately walked over to these worthy people, and begged most earnestly to state to them that we were all in reality much more in his satanic majesty's interests than we pretended; requested for my own share particularly to have a good word spoken for me in their prayers to him, and, after mutual civilities on parting, very respectfully wished them at the devil.

This gentleman, variously treated, continued, for several days after, to engross our whole conversation;—some thinking it spoke well for themselves to abuse him without moderation; others observing that after all he owed not only his existence but his propensities, like every created being, to the author

of all good; and could only act under express authority.—This position was chiefly maintained, but very mildly, by a fat, sleek, ruddy-faced Armenian, who nominally resided at Yulfa,[4] but whose real abode was any part of the road between Turkey, Persia, and India. Already had he spent, in carrying merchandise backward and forward between those countries, two good thirds of man's ordinary span of life; and still did he as little as ever meditate a more tranquil mode of existence for the remainder of his days. It is true that, though maallim Moorsa's body was in constant motion, his mind seemed stationary, and neither to advance nor to retrograde an inch: and it was no doubt owing to the complete repose of his intellectual part, that the corporeal portion so well stood the fatigue which he made it undergo. With him the sword, so far from wearing out the scabbard, appeared of no use but to keep that scabbard properly poised, amid the incessant jolting of his horse or camel.

"Tell me, maallim Moorsa," said I one day, as we stopped to water our beasts of burthen, "what can tempt you, at your age and with your fortune, to toil harder, and to allow yourself fewer indulgences than the meanest of your own domestics; and, far from home and friends, to spend your days jolting on a rough-paced dromedary, and your nights sweltering in a wretched birth? Are hunger, thirst, burning sands, nipping blasts, tormenting

insects, venomous reptiles, extortionary guides, rapacious enemies, ruinous engagements, and unexpected losses so very indispensable to your happiness, that you must travel hundreds and hundreds of miles in search of these little adventitious enjoyments?"

"I will tell you," answered the placid Armenian. "It is habit, all powerful habit, which makes me live as I do;—habit, more persuasive than the suggestions of reason, and the remonstrances of friends. When first I commenced my wandering mode of life, I only intended to continue it during a limited period. The repose at home which followed each journey seemed short, the setting out afresh was irksome: I reluctantly quitted a young and handsome wife, a group of fond and playful children and a set of jovial and hospitable friends, for new fatigues and dangers; and never did I start without saying to myself,—'well! let me only possess a decent competency, and I shall sit down never more to move, until packed up like my own goods, and carried to the grave!'

"But mark the sequel! As years rolled on, my wife grew old and cross, my children left me to set up separate establishments, my convivial friends became sedate and parsimonious, and I myself by degrees began to lose, in my lonely journeys, my former keen relish for society. As with my increasing wealth my ideas of a decent competency

enlarged, my taste for the things it was intended to secure diminished. Instead of feeling a greater impatience to get home, and more pleasure in staying under my own roof, I found precisely the reverse to be the case. I now travel homewards more leisurely; I am able to sleep more soundly on the night which precedes my arrival; and the happiness of being with my family sooner loses its zest. My increasing torpor of mind and of body more speedily crave that excitement which only the bustle of the caravan can give: the desire of returning to my business and journeys revives more quickly: I am bent with greater force upon still achieving one last lucrative expedition ere I sit down for ever; and I can less bear the idea of already cooping myself up, like the worm in the web of its own weaving, for the whole of the time previous to my final change."

"Man, man!" cried I, "struggle against this increasing restlessness; or what good are your riches to do yourself or others?"

"Alas, I have struggled!" replied the Armenian. "It was but the very last time of my being at home that I said to myself: 'maallim Moorsa, maallim Moorsa, dost thou mean never to be quiet? Thy daughters are well married, thy sons in excellent business, thou possessest three times as much as with thy old Rachel thou canst spend in the most profuse living. Then wander not any longer about

the world, like one bereft of house and home; but, by staying among thy friends, and giving up all further ventures, secure thyself from the risk of losses and sorrows,'—and thereupon I forced myself to try to enter into all the various enjoyments of a sedentary life. But alas! the thing would not do: I soon found a noisome evil steal upon me, penetrate my inmost marrow, and spoil the relish of all my pleasure. It was not loss; it was not sorrow: but it was far more intolerable than either;—it was ennui! An insuperable listlessness took possession of my being, a nausea past all enduring pursued me incessantly. In the midst of friends, of good cheer, and of comforts of every description, I cast a look of envy upon every human being who set out to encounter new fatigues and dangers. The recital of the speculations, the purchases, the sales, the commissions and the profits of other merchants, made my heart bound, and my mouth water with longing. My own existence, while unemployed in similar transactions, appeared to me a mere blank,—or rather, a gloomy expanse of entire darkness; and my melancholy and pining must at last have brought me prematurely to the grave, had not, on the urgent entreaties of my friends, a sensible physician been called in to consider of my case:—for my mental uneasiness had by this time degenerated into an actual disease of the body, which seemed to threaten a fatal termination!"

"And what could he prescribe"—cried I—"in a case of this nature? was it rhubarb or senna; emollients or tonics?"

"Neither the one nor the other; but two hundred pieces of shawl, with the addition of as many bales of silk as I had room for, to be bought in Cashmeer, and to be sold at Smyrna. The very prescription made me revive. The moment I set about taking the remedy, I felt like a fish put back into the water: my decaying strength returned, and my fading cheek resumed its healthy hue."

"Your case," said I, shrugging up my shoulders, "I see, is hopeless."

"I fear it is," answered Moorsa. "I have lived a constant traveller, and a traveller, I suppose, I shall die. On these roads on which I spent my youth and manhood, I feel destined to end my days. But I do not much repine at this ordination: it affords me a pleasure which no other could give. I talk not of that of seeing different manners and customs. Those are things we Armenians care little about. But while abroad, I fancy that all the beings I possess at home are angels; and I never stay at home long enough to be undeceived."

This account of maallim Moorsa struck me forcibly: it sounded like a warning. If a heavy Armenian, with a comfortable home, had found roving habits take, through dint of constant indulgence, such root in his constitution, as to despair of ever

throwing them off, how much more was a state of incurable restlessness likely to become the confirmed disease of one who, like me, was by nature averse from domestication, and had not been able to wrest from fortune the least little clod of earth, on which to sit down, when tired of rambling, as in a spot subject to my own rule, but, like the loose sands in the desert, ever remained liable to be blown about from place to place, by every slightest gust of wind. I felt so alarmed at the danger, that I determined to avoid it, by fixing myself on the first opportunity. Already I possessed in my little Alexis a polar star, to which began to point all my thoughts, all my wishes,—a magnet, whose attraction I felt even when steering in a contrary direction. Him I should some day have near me, him I should educate, him I should make the sole object of my care: but to execute that project I must have a home; I must have means:—and in search of that home, and of those means, I must for the present go on wandering as before.

CHAPTER V.

On the thirty-ninth day of our departure from Aleppo, at the sixth hour of the afternoon, parched, dusty and cross, we reached a vast suburb of mud, traversed a long bridge of boats, and found ourselves in the celebrated city of Bagdad. As we slowly advanced towards our resting-place, I could not help exclaiming at every step, "Is this the capital of Haroon-al-raschid? this the residence of Zobeïdé? this the favourite scene of eastern romance? Alas! how fallen from its ancient splendor!"

Suleiman still governed the vast pashalik of Bagdad; the last and highest fruit of many successive vicissitudes and promotions. A Georgian by birth, and by condition a mamluke, he had in 1775, on the death of his predecessor and patron, been appointed to the mootsellimlik of Basra. Besieged in that city by Kherim-khan, the usurper of the Persian monarchy, he held out fifteen months ere he surrendered the place; was, in consequence of the capitulation, carried a captive to Sheeras, and after a two years' detention, had, on the death of Kerim, the good fortune to be again restored to his government. To this subordinate appointment the

Porte, in consideration of his valour and his services, soon after added the pashalik of Bagdad, the most extensive and powerful of the Turkish empire.

Long did Suleiman sustain with unexampled dignity the weight of his manifold honours. His warlike talents kept in awe the fierce hordes of tributary Koords and Arabs at the two opposite extremities of his vast province, while his justice and moderation endeared him to the milder inhabitants of the intervening districts. But ere I beheld his dominions his glory had begun to fade, his resplendent sun to set. For some time past both the body and the mind of the mighty Suleiman seemed to have lapsed from their former energy into a state of imbecility and torpor. Achmet, once a groom in Suleiman's stable, now held in his stead the reins of empire. In the capacity of the Pasha's kehaya, he enjoyed both the direction of his councils and the command of his armies: but he was not content merely to represent—he totally superseded his master. Suleiman was forgotten in his favourite; and while the Pasha only resembled the inert idol concealed in the sanctuary, the kehaya was the high-priest, who, holding the keys of the adytum, ruled with an high hand the worshippers, and swept away all the offerings left upon the altar.

My former situation and services in Turkey procured me access to this all powerful personage. I was received at his levee with the utmost courtesy.

Nothing, indeed, could be more fascinating than Achmet's exterior. His features were fine, his figure noble, his manners dignified yet mild, his wit playful without pungency: he seemed to promote unrestrained liberty of speech, even where it attacked most directly his opinion and interests: his own expressions often dropped as if from an unguarded lip and a guileless heart. He spoke with affability to all, and never ceased bewailing the pomp his situation required. No passion ever could be perceived to disturb the serenity of his countenance or the placidity of his temper. He would occasionally perform acts of great liberality; always expressed his repugnance to harsh or cruel measures, and, when compelled by reasons of state to sign the death warrant even of an enemy, shed tears of sympathy which he seemed afraid to show.

But most deceitful was this fair outside. If angry passions never ruffled Achmet's countenance, or fierce resentment never found a vent at Achmet's lips, they only rankled the more in the recesses of his impenetrable bosom. Humble in his manner, his heart swelled with unbounded pride: for every piastre he gave in gifts, his agents doubled their exactions tenfold: his aversions, his hatreds, undiscoverable in the presence of their object, broke out with greater virulence in distant times and places. The more he expatiated on the pleasure of pardoning, the more certain it was that he meditated some

act of signal revenge; and, if he sighed at being obliged to represent his master, it was because he longed for Suleiman's death, to be master himself.

Achmet had for some time been waging war in the Pacha's name with a religious sect, considered by the Turks as new and heretical, which daily acquired greater extension in Arabia, under the name of Wahhabees. As I was destined soon to come into contact with its followers, a short sketch of its origin and progress may not be inapposite in this place.

Islamism had found in the arid but extensive province of Nedjd—the inmost kernel of the Arabian desert—not only its first cradle, but its firmest subsequent bulwark. While among the stationary and close-pressed population of the surrounding districts the doctrine of the koran had become speedily subject to fermentation and to change, and had by degrees ramified into numberless diversities of belief and of practice, the more hostile to each other in proportion as they presented less difference, it continued among the children of Anahsé, of Kaïbar and of Taï—few in number, distant in abode, thinly diffused over an immense and sterile desert, and ever moving from one part of its surface to another—to be transmitted from father to son in all its primitive purity. The erratic life of these Bedoweens allowed them little time to exhaust their intellect in idle speculations, to perplex

their conscience with imaginary difficulties, and to pervert their creed by absurd explanations: it withheld from them the means of burthening their communities with a cumbrous hierarchy, or to waste their leisure on a complicated ritual; and throughout their vast but indefinite domain, the text of the prophet continued in every age the only rule of the individual, the desert his only temple, and the leader of his tribe his only imam or priest. That constant motion to which the stream owes its limpidity, preserved the faith of the wandering Arab from alloy, and his practices from corruption. Precisely, however, because the more undeviating adherence of the roving Bedoween to the original revelation of Mohammed had never been superseded by later doctrines, nor had clashed with subtler and more complicated tenets, it was never embodied by those that professed it into a separate code, nor stamped with a separate name, intended to distinguish these more orthodox Mussulmen from the remainder of the followers of Mohammed. They therefore attracted attention and excited obloquy the less, as their dispersion and their weakness prevented them from attempting to extend their faith, or to gain converts to their doctrine, but on the contrary made them readily display a temporary assimilation of their external practices with whatever ramification of the Mohammedan religion they

were led amongst, either in the pursuit of business or of pleasure—in the tending of their flocks, or in the conduct of their caravans; and this the more easily, as their own worship was divested of peculiar forms, and their feelings towards the followers of a different doctrine free from that hatred which only arises from daily conflict.

But totally different became the case when the primitive opinions here set forth, no longer confined to the roving children of the sterile Nedjd, began by degrees to insinuate themselves among the stationary population thickly crowded in the fertile districts of Ared;—when that creed which had been cherished only in silence in the lonely tent, became the topic of daily converse in towns and in villages. It was then that the belief adopted from the neighbouring Bedoween, marking more forcibly by greater approximation its difference from the tenets to which a more civilised Islamism had by degrees degenerated, began to excite attention, to produce enmity, and to cause among its followers a closer union with each other, and a more entire separation from those that remained faithful to their paternal creed.

And this happened towards the close of the seventeenth Christian century. At that period the most eminent of the districts of Ared,—that of the Ayani,—was ruled by a Schaich of the name of

Suleiman, descended from the same family of the Koreïsch—now reduced to a few obscure individuals—whence sprung the last of prophets. This schaich derived his chief income from the numerous herds of camels which he let out on hire, according to the custom of his country, and which yielded him an immense profit, especially at that season of the year when the Indian Mohammedans, performing their pilgrimage to the holy house, disembarked at Katif, and traversed Ared in their way to Mekkah:—but, loaded with riches, Suleiman remained long unblessed with progeny. In his old age, however, and when he no longer had any hope of offspring, heaven most unexpectedly bestowed on him a son.

Extraordinary deviations from the regular course of nature are always remembered to have taken place at the birth of extraordinary personages;—and, when the son of Suleiman rose to be the founder of a new sect, the proselytes to his doctrine failed not to record the phenomena which their predecessors had witnessed. Be it known, therefore, that, at the birth of this high-fated child, an universal tremor convulsed the air, shook the earth, and made every mosque that stands upon the ground totter unto its foundations, and every minaret that shoots up in the sky topple on its base: and while, during several successive nights, cities, villages, cattles and fields shone with a preternatural and

brilliant light, the lamps which burned in the sepulchral chambers of Mohammed and of the other saints of Islamism went out, as if in anticipation of the fate that awaited them, in spite of every effort of imams and of snuffers.

Abd-ool-wahhab, or the slave of the Most High, was the name given to the infant thus peculiarly marked as the favourite of heaven. He was sent at an early age to study the law in the most celebrated medressés of Damascus, and there learnt from the subtlest of Mohammedan doctors themselves the best method of impugning the corruptions of their creed. Accordingly, he no sooner returned among his fellow citizens, ripe for a reform in their faith, than he began publicly to preach the necessity of an entire abandonment of the corrupt tenets and superstitious practices, which had so long disgraced Islamism.

The doctrine of Abd-ool-wahhab has been represented as pure deism:—but nothing can be less consonant with truth than this assertion. The son of Suleiman not only maintained most strenuously the divine origin of the koran; he might even be said to have rendered it the chief object of his reform to restore to the sacred text all its primitive importance and weight, by rejecting every article of faith or rule of conduct subsequently derived even from the oral precepts of the prophet himself; by disencum-

bering the book divinely revealed of all the commentaries with which, in the course of time, its pages had been burthened; and by loudly proclaiming that, without any adventitious aid, the words brought from heaven by the Angel Gabriel were alone able to supply all the spiritual wants of the faithful:—for while Abd-ool-wahhab regarded the koran as received directly from the Most High, he considered even Mohammed its first promulgator as only an ordinary man, endowed with no superhuman character, no gift of miracles, nay no peculiar sanctity whatever, transferable to his own deeds or sayings, as distinct from the sacred rescripts showered leaf by leaf upon him; and, above all, he treated the stamp of holiness affixed on other individuals—imams, doctors, or expounders of the law—blazoned forth in the later ages of Islamism, together with the pilgrimages performed to peculiar tombs, and the virtues attributed to peculiar relics, as absolute idolatry: whence, like every other apostle of a new doctrine, who only bows his head submissively to older established worships, while his own still totters in the weakness of infancy, but raises his hands against them the moment his innovations have acquired sufficient strength,—the first pious performance Abd-ool-wahhab enjoined his new disciples (as soon as enabled to achieve it) was the destruction of the chapels of Mekkah and Medina,

of Imam-Aly and Imam-Husseïn; where Sunnees and Scheyees yearly unite in devout orisons to the ashes of pretended saints. Their dust was, like that of the desert, to be scattered in the wind; and the treasures which adorned their monuments were to reward the piety of their despoilers.

When about the middle of the eighteenth century, Abd-ool-wahhab—oppressed with years of renown and sanctity—was at last gathered unto his fathers, his son Mohammed, educated like himself in the study of the law, and consequently also distinguished by the title of moollah, succeeded him as preacher of the new doctrine. Moollah Mohammed gave himself more wholly up to its internal light, since that from without cheered not his eyes—struck from his birth with incurable blindness. This circumstance indeed prevented him from leading out his proselytes himself, in the wars for the defence or propagation of his new creed, but moollah Mohammed's achievements in battle could be dispensed with: the irrefragable truth of Wahhabism had already found a champion famed for martial exploits in Ibn-Sehood, the supreme ruler of Ared, who resided at Derayeh, and who became the temporal chief of the Wahhabees, while moollah Mohammed remained their spiritual leader.

From the moment that the new doctrine, adopted by old-established princes, became enabled to add

the force of arms to that of arguments, it made rapid and extensive progress. Almost immediately on its promulgation, its more recent name had sanctioned the tenets already professed time out of mind by the roving tribes of the desert; and soon after its establishment in the Ared, the stationary Schaichs of the province of Kherdj enlisted under its banners. It now rapidly approached the Hedjas; and the Shereef of Mekkah, the guardian of the Kaaba, began to tremble for his power and for his dominions. Loudly inveighing against the apathy with which other states saw the danger approach them, he determined to avert it from the realms he ruled, by promoting a powerful diversion.

To the eastward of the Nedjd extends the half desert half cultivated province of Hadjar; the ancient domain of the mighty tribe of Beni-Haled. One part of the year, Ibn-Arar its chief roves with his tents over the boundless plain, the other part he resides in El-Hassa the capital. This city once recognised the authority of the Sultan; but has since been reclaimed by its Arab founders. Turkish fortifications, however, still surround its precincts, and Turkish families form a principal part of its population. Its ayals or primates bore the Wahhabees, both in their quality as Osmanlees and as Sunnees, a peculiar hatred. Thence the Shereef of Mekkah found little difficulty in exciting them to

hostilities against the spreading heretics. Arar took up arms and marched to Derayeh.

Already had internal anarchy and dissensions begun to shake to its foundations the new doctrine. Nothing therefore seems more probable than that, like many older heresies, that of the Wahhabees would have blazed an instant in the district where it arose, and then have sunk again for ever into irretrievable oblivion, had not the unseasonable interference of strangers providentially preserved it from so inglorious a fate. The danger which threatened the Wahhabees from without, forced them to stifle their internal feuds. They united for common defence and safety. Sehood, before harassed by continual murmurings and mutinies, now found his subjects all obedience and zeal. And after several years of warfare with Arar, instead of the children of Beni-Haled getting nearer Derayeh, the sons of Wahhab had sensibly approached El-Hassa.

As soon as Abd-ool-azeez, the son and successor of Ibn-Sehood, felt himself secure on the side of Hadjar, he turned his views towards Mekkah. Revenge as well as avarice animated him against the chief of this rich and holy city. But where all lived upon what he came to destroy, he found but few friends within the walls disposed to second his attempts from without. It was only at the close of

the third campaign that he got sight of the fortress of Tayif, situated on a high mountain at a small distance from Mekkah; and before he could lay siege to the place, the death of his spiritual partner, moollah Mohammed—whose earthly career had extended to near a century—forced him, by the confusion it caused among his followers, to return to Derayeh.

The Shereef of Mekkah thought this the time for changing his defensive into an offensive war, and pursued the Wahhabees into their own territory. There, however, these sectaries, rapidly facing about with their strength now refreshed, routed his harassed army so completely, that he was hardly able, in his flight, to reach the gates of his capital.

The Porte now awoke from its trance, and began to feel some alarm at the progress of the new sect. The Sultan directed the Pasha of Bagdad to provide for the defence of the holy city; and the Pasha of Bagdad transmitted the Sultan's instructions to his vassals, the Arab schaichs of Montefih and of Beni-Haled. Both chiefs prepared immediately to obey: but the schaich of Montefih was murdered by a disguised Wahhabee, in his own tent; and the schaich of Beni-Haled, after an unsuccessful campaign, saw El-Hassa his capital sacked by the victorious enemy, who took Sobier

by storm, made Basra tremble, and threatened Meschid-Aly with annihilation.

Suleiman's kehaya at last determined to advance in person. In 1793,—the year before my arrival at Bagdad,—he had succeeded in making Abd-ool-azeez evacuate his new conquests, and return, though with immense plunder, to Derayeh. Great consternation continued, nevertheless, to prevail at Bagdad; for the Wahhab doctrine had now extended its sway to almost every part of Arabia north of Yemen, and had gained the very core of the tribe of Montefih itself, hitherto considered as the chief bulwark of the Othoman empire against the new sectaries. It is true, the Turkish mob tried to hush its fears by asking with a sneer what could be effected by an undisciplined rabble, armed only with matchlocks, against regular armies and fortified places; but the shrewder part of the community felt that no temporary check could ensure a vast province vulnerable in every point, an empire tottering to its base, and a militia enervated by sloth and luxury, against a race of men with bodies of steel, with souls of fire, whose own abode was the inaccessible heart of the desert; whose appearance in other quarters resembled that of the unlooked-for hurricane; whose patience of fatigues, hardships, and privations exceeded all idea, as their rapidity of motion baffled all calculation; who, heeding neither

heat, nor hunger, nor yet thirst, performed with a rapidity which no other troops could emulate, marches of a length in which no other troops could follow them; who fell in the most sudden manner on the points most distant from those prepared for their reception; who, on the smallest reverse, always had their sands open behind them, to retire to beyond the reach of pursuit; whose obedience to their chiefs in whatever concerned the interests of their new creed knew no bounds, while their bravery in battle and their contempt of death were fed by a fanaticism far exceeding the long worn-out zeal of the Turks; and who, in all their expeditions, were equally animated by the interests of religion, and by the hopes of plunder. Nay, timid men pretended that in the very midst of Bagdad, in the broad face of day, Wahhabees had been seen—scarcely disguised—taking note of the individuals and marking the houses, which their vengeance or their avarice had devoted to destruction.

Mean while Achmet kehaya was preparing to employ the leisure which the temporary retreat of these sectaries had left him, in an expedition against the district of Kara-Djoolan, one of the fiefs of the pashalik of Bagdad. Its Coordish inhabitants had of their own authority appointed one of their countrymen as governor; and this new delegate was

trying to obtain the Pasha's confirmation by force of arms.

I offered to raise a corps of dellis for this expedition, and was accepted. Knowing despatch to be the soul of war, I did not stickle much in my recruits for age or size, and when my bairak[1] was complete, had the satisfaction of seeing it present a most agreeable variety of ages and statures:—but what of that? courage was not measured by the inch, nor bravery estimated according to the length of the beard. With my raw recruits I was ready for the kehaya, long before this renowned warrior was ready for me.

Babel's ancient confusion of tongues still seems to prevail at Bagdad. Turks, Persians, Indians, Jews, Egyptians, Greeks, and Arabs were constantly vying, which, in their various dialects, should outbawl the other. Among the motley group collected in the market-place, the fat paunch and ruddy face of maallim Moorsa often shone pre-eminent. Whenever he saw me, he failed not to hail his old travelling companion; and, one day that his mercantile transactions left him at leisure, he introduced the captain of dellis to some Ispahan merchants, who had left their country on the dissensions which followed the elevation of the eunuch Aga Mohammed. They were scheyees, and certainly, in the eyes of a true sunnee, a very abominable set of people;

for not only did they maintain Aly to be first in rightful succession to Mohammed, and not Aboobekr; but they made no scruple of carrying little paintings of pretty faces in their books of poetry. It was shocking to behold!

Notwithstanding such extreme relaxation of morals, I could not help thinking my Persians agreeable companions enough. They were the first men whom I had found anxious to mix with drudgery of trade the refinements of literature. One of them in particular, Aboo-Reza by name, possessed a very pretty turn for poetry himself. His imagination, it is true, was not of that soaring order which, like the eagle, rises far above the surface of the earth, and embraces in its rapid glance those distant similitudes only viewed from the high vault of the heavens. It rather resembled the playful butterfly, which, hovering near the enamelled surface of the field, is content to sip, in gaudy attire, the honied cup of each humble daisy half concealed among the herbage. He was happy in the art of seizing the *à-propos* of the moment, the flitting shadow of the insect in its noon-day flight: and his impromptu verses on the events of the day were, by his friends, extolled far above the productions of Hafeez and of Ferdoosi,—poets grown, as it was thought, somewhat musty with age. The most felicitous fits of inspiration used to seize him, when half a dozen of

us were assembled in a little back room, over a large bowl of a certain ruby-coloured liquor, whose fumes seem in all ages to have had the property of exciting the poetic fervor. It was then that his eyes began to sparkle, and his lips to pour forth almost as many involuntary effusions, as they admitted voluntary draughts of the inspiring nectar.

One evening Aboo-Reza looked so much more solemn than usual, that all wondered what monstrous mouse the mountain was going to produce. It kept us not long in suspense. Striking—for the purpose of inforcing silence—against the sonorous vessel round which we were seated: "Mourn, Persia, mourn!" roared the expanding merchant: —"When the ancient gem of the empire, the primeval seat of the sovereign, the once proud and populous Ispahan lost its charms in the eyes of its master; when the rude hand of the intruder Time was suffered to rob its golden domes of their rich enamelled zones, and to wrap its silver lakes in veils of nauseous slime; when its crystal fountains only continued to play to the hooting owl, and its shady arbours to shelter the howling fox; —when the king of kings cast the radiance of his favour no longer on the stately matron robed in gold, but on the warmer concubine crowned with roses; when gay Sheeraz, flushed with sparkling

wine, received him in her bosom,—then began trouble and confusion to spread throughout the land; then burst open on all sides the flood-gates of purple blood!—But when the whirlwind of frightful war again tore up the blazing throne of the Sofis, scarcely rooted in the South, and on its iron wings carried the canopy of state to the frozen tracts of the North; when the gemmed carpet of the sovereign, erst sprinkled with violets, was spread on sheets of ice; when the benumbing shadow of frowning Demawend obscured the very brow of the ruler, and darkened the serenity of his once smiling aspect,—then indeed did the genius of the chilling blast imprint on snows that melt not the seal of Persia's doom: then rushed forth to the destruction of Djemshid's tottering empire, every demon of darkness; then spread far and wide over its withered plains the baneful offspring of the polar lightning; then did streams of ensanguined flames, crimsoning heaven's vault itself, reflect the earth's surface, deluged by the reeking tide;—then,—hushed all other sounds,—was heard among the sun's orphan children, nought but the wail of sorrow and the cry of despair!"[2]

Here Aboo-Reza, stopped, to enjoy our admiration and to collect our applause: but our lips continued locked in silent wonder, at the sublime thought of delivering the aurora borealis of an

army of Russian soldiers, until real sounds of war seemed gathering at the door. All now trembled, all turned pale; each guest fixed inquiring looks on his neighbour, and at last, in rushed a grim detachment of actual tangible soldiers. They were only those of our own Pasha, however, and came for the mere purpose of lodging us in a place of security, as men who had attracted the attention of the police by their secret conventicles, and could only be conspirators against the state. The loudness of our poetic friend's voice, while reciting his effusion, had made this valiant troop stop at the door to listen; and the less its members had understood of the drift of Aboo-Reza's rhapsody, the more they had considered it as an undeniable proof of our guilty purpose. Nothing, they all swore, could be so evident as that the peak of Demawend meant the Pasha's kehaya, and that we were the hurricane let loose for his destruction. This danger was averted by clapping us in prison, where we felt rather uncomfortable, notwithstanding Aboo-Reza's assurances that, die when we might, he had all our epitaphs ready written in his pocket.

A descendant of one of the tribes of Israel was the secret instigator of this attack upon our liberties. Formerly chief of the customs at Basra, the Jew Abd-allah had been removed from that situation on some complaint of the English factory.

He was since become at Bagdad not only the cashier, but the chief counsellor of the kehaya, whose financial operations he managed entirely. Achmet would sooner have affronted many a great man in office than his little Jew. Abd-allah, leaving his ancient wife, with his old employment, at Basra, had entirely new furnished his harem at Bagdad; and it was said that, in honour of the young bud of the tribe of Israel with whom he adorned his new establishment, he abstained three whole days from usury—the sabbath however included. Little had this proof of love availed him. The fascinating Sarah made but an inadequate return for such sacrifices; and while the husband passed his mornings with the kehaya, one or other of the kehaya's officers used to beguile the solitude of the wife. Anxious to get some money advanced me upon my bairak, I went several times to the seraff's. Sarah, from her grated balcony, espied my visits to her husband's serdar,[3] and seemed determined to console me for his backwardness. But as well might the fair Israelite have tried to communicate her new flame to a heap of ashes, as to my anguished, worn-out heart. It was proof against all her attractions natural and acquired.

Among Jews and among gentiles, in scripture and in fable, in ancient times and in modern, it has been the invariable rule for ladies to accuse of too

much warmth those in whom they found too little. Sarah departed not from the established rule. She represented me as having manifested a slight opinion of her virtue; and her husband was delighted to see its severity thus confirmed. He had heard of my nocturnal meetings with the Persian merchants. Forthwith he denounced us to the kehaya as guilty of treasonable practices; but, on an investigation, those of his wife alone came to light.

Our liberation followed speedily. The indignity of the imprisonment, however, rankled in my mind, and I swore to the kehaya an irreconcilable hatred. From different causes, many other worthy inhabitants of Bagdad shared in this feeling; and a small knot of us, chiefly officers of the jenissaries, never met without very freely expressing our resentment. One evening, in an armourer's shop where we used frequently to assemble, we began by some chance mimicking a Greek superstitious practice. I knotted a handkerchief into a little puppet, christened it Achmet, and, after loading it with invectives, invited the party to plunge their swords into the little kehaya. Not until he was fairly demolished did we perceive—squatted in a dark corner of the shop —an Arab, who had been cheapening a lot of muskets. He seemed as little anxious to be noticed by us, as we were pleased to discover him: but our conversation had been in Turkish, and we gave

ourselves little concern about the impression which our sallies might make on a Bedoween.

A few evenings after this meeting, as I passed through a back street far away from my lodging, I saw myself rather abruptly approached by a man enveloped in his abbah, who had been observing me for some time. I clapped my hand on my pistol: but the stranger, assuring me he came in peace, only begged a moment's audience, in some place where no one might overhear our discourse. I made a sign to him to walk on before me, and when we got to an open area, bade him stop at some distance, and disclose his mysterious business.

He first disclosed his person:—opening his cloak, he asked whether I remembered him.

"You are," replied I, "the Arab of Montefih, whom we met the other evening in Feristah's shop."

"Not of Montefih, thank God!" cried the stranger, shaking his head; "not of that amphibious race, half Turk, half Arab, which pretends to respect the Bedoween, and yet pays tribute to the Pasha. Mine is a purer blood and a less corrupt creed. I am a son of Anahse, and a follower of Wahhab. Only to serve my faith do I stoop to wear the garb of my enemies: only to seek among my foes the weapons with which to slay them do I breathe their foul atmosphere. You perhaps think my mission dangerous,—and so truly it may be in the sense of the world:—but know that, nevertheless, for one

of us who falls in the performance of this task, fifty are found imploring to fill his place. We fear little on earth, whose wreath of glory is weaving in heaven! Your hatred to the kehaya is known to equal our utmost abhorrence of the merciless slave. Many a time have I stood unnoticed by your side, listening to your discourse and watching your actions, when you dared to paint him in his true colours. Then join, if not our belief, at least our measures. We want not bravery, nor zeal, but tactics and discipline. Such as bring among us military skill may expect the highest honours. Leisurely consult your feelings, and let me have your answer."

This answer I felt ready enough to give on the spot, provided I knew my friend commissioned to take it. I saw little prospect of advantage in staying at Bagdad, and I was inclined to try the Wahhabees. All I required on the part of the Arab was a sight of his credentials. In proof of his mission, he took off his turban and showed me his bare head:—it had not the lock of hair which other Mohammedans leave as a handle by which to be taken up to heaven. In further confirmation of his character, he pulled out of his bosom the signet of his leader; and as a third testimonial, he offered to introduce me to a conventicle of Arabs and others, friendly to his sect, who would vouch for his veracity. This party I saw, and was satisfied. Deter-

mining upon the journey, I received the seal of the fraternity, and settled the day on which I was to be furnished with the letters and other instruments, which the Arab purposed to commit to my care.

As I went home, I met one of those Tartar messengers of the Pasha, who, like maallim Moorsa, spend their lives on the road, but, only carrying words instead of wares, fly like lightning where the merchants creep like slugs. This man, Feiz-ullah by name, had served the Capitan-Pasha during his short Visirate. I had done him some service on the banks of the Danube, which he now took the opportunity of repaying on those of the Tigris. "My friend Mehemet and myself were on the watch for you," cried he, as soon as he saw me. "What you may have done, we know not, nor care to know: but what will be done to you, if you stay, we can pretty well guess. In a long conference between the kehaya and the Jenissary-Aga, of which I caught a few words, your name was so frequently mentioned, and so angrily blended with the terms of conspiracy, secret meetings and Wahhabees, that I slipt out ere I got my message, in order to warn you not to stay till it is given me. As you value your life, leave Bagdad immediately.—Ishallah![4] you will be safe among the robbers of the desert."

On uttering these last words, my informer was already out of sight. I ran not after him for further particulars. A month's pay of my troop, just

received, was still in my pocket; and purposing within the hour to review my noble dellis, I had ordered my horse round to a particular spot. Nothing remained for me to do but to hie me thither, and vault into my saddle. Bidding a mental adieu to my corps, which was actually waiting for me under arms, I borrowed its pay for my travelling expenses, clapped spurs to my steed, got out of the city by a circuitous route, overset a long file of barbers going in procession to the tomb of their patron, the Prophet's barber, at Madaïn; crossed the bridge, traversed the suburbs, and, reaching the outer gate, took the road to Hillah.

Divided in two by the Euphrates, and encompassed by delightful gardens, that city might, after a fatiguing journey, have tempted a less hurried traveller to repose; but I feared its constant intercourse with Bagdad, and pushed on to Kefil, where I stopped a few hours. Refreshed by my halt, I left the burying-place of the prophet Ezechiel to go to that of the nephew of Mohammed. A wide desert separates the two sanctuaries, and few were the thanks which I gave the pious souls, who have built in the burning sands that lie between them fifty houses of prayer, and not one place of rest. My lassitude at last grew so extreme as to throw me into utter despair: for my faithful courser—till then wont to ride as on the wind, and scarce to leave the print of his hoof in the heaviest sands—seemed

still more worn-out than myself, was scarcely able to set one foot before the other, and ready, at every step, to drop down from sheer fatigue. Yet I made him toil on—much as it grieved me—lest night should overtake us where we must both have perished from absolute want. At last, after several more hours of a slow and painful progress, during which I frequently was tempted to lie down and breathe my last on the spot, I began to discern a luminous speck in the horizon, as if kindled all at once by some fairy torch. It looked from the boundless plain like a beacon descried at night on the wide ocean. Yet was it not a blazing fire, nor yet a twinkling star. It was the gilt cupola of the tomb of Aly, reflecting from its burnished surface the last rays of the sun. Its splendor, gleaming far in the desert, and marking amidst dreary solitudes the busy haunts of man, restored gladness to my drooping soul. I knew I saw the spot, however distant, which was to end my labours. Even my horse caught the influence. He shook his mane, snorted, and directing his wide expanded nostril to whence seemed to blow the tidings of certain relief, made fresh efforts to reach the wished-for goal. I patted him on the neck in gratitude, and, during the remainder of my journey, kept my eye steadily riveted on the blazing dome as on my polar star. Anxiously I watched its increase, in order to judge of the lessening distance; but much time still

elapsed, and many a wearisome step was still to be performed, and complete darkness overcast the lonely scene around me, ere I drew sensibly near the end of my journey. Nor did I quit the dismal mounds of barren sands which on all sides encompassed my scarce perceptible path, until at the very gates of the town. When indeed, in the uncertainty how much further I still might have to crawl, I saw the jagged battlements and the pointed arch rise all at once before me at the small distance of scarce fifty yards, I gave a scream of joy; and when I passed under the sounding vault, dark and gloomy as it looked, I felt as if entering the portals of paradise.

Arrived at the khan, my first care was directed to the faithful companion of my toil. I myself led my weary steed to the stall, and with one hand stroked his panting loins in thanks for his services, while with the other I offered him his dearly earned repast. Alas! he would not touch his food, turned away from his drink, and lying down on the ground, thrust his head between his legs, cast on me his keen full eye, and, seized with a convulsive shivering, fell on his side, and died.

"Oh my noble, my beloved steed! who bore me through so many toils, and saved me from so many dangers; who with such gentleness combined such fire; whose mettle my simple whisper could repress or raise—were then your unslackening efforts for

the preservation of my life to cost your own! Had I been Sultan Mahmoud, I would have raised a monument over your body; an Alexander, I would have built a city to your memory: Anastasius could only give you his tears!"

I looked about to replace my loss. An Arab brought me a horse, of whose high pedigree he exhibited the most splendid testimonials. I thought it prudent to inquire into the character of the seller himself. He had occasionally stopped travellers on the road, and he might, in ordinary matters, be a little addicted to lying as well as to thieving; but in an affair in which his honour stood so materially committed as in the present, he was above suspicion. Sooner would he spill the blood of his father than falsely warrant that of his horse. All his certificates were authenticated: I made the purchase I could not avoid; ate, my supper, and having bestowed on the kehaya a few hearty curses, lay down and fell asleep.

CHAPTER VI.

Earlier in the morning than a man might have preferred who had gone late to rest, I was awaked by a prodigious clamour. At first I thought Meschid-Aly on fire; then, invaded by the Wahhabees; but, on rising, found the noise only proceeded from a few sunnees and scheyees, assembled round the tomb of the saint to whom the place is consecrated, and engaged in a trial of lungs;—each sect endeavouring in its orisons to outbawl the other. Meschid-Aly belongs to the sunnee inhabitants, but derives its chief support from scheyee pilgrims. Within its precincts, therefore, neither persuasion dares to insult the other more grievously than by invoking with all its might its own peculiar patron; and the sunnees cry out Omar! and the scheyees bawl out Aly! until want of voice reduces both alike to dumb show.

Among the other strange faces, attracted like my own by the clamour, I espied some which I was quite sure I had left at Bagdad. This discovery made me resolve entirely to quit the jurisdiction of Suleiman, for the scarcely less extended domain of the powerful Arab schaich of Montefih, whose au-

thority extends far along the banks of the Phrat, and of the Schat-el-Arab. I therefore crossed the city, and again plunged into the desert.

Winding round the western extremity of the dry basin of Nedgef, I insensibly advanced in the lonely waste, without precisely knowing whither I was in the first instance going, but intending by degrees to work my way from one lesser kabile[1] or tribe to another, until I should reach the domain of the Wahhabees, the final object of my journey. An old abbah covered my Turkish dress; a sack of rice on one side, and a cruise of water on the other, were suspended from my saddle; and thus carrying my bed and board, and at liberty to spread my table and couch wherever I pleased under the canopy of heaven, I trusted for the remainder to my pistols and to Providence, not doubting that I should soon reach some Bedoween camp, where I might claim hospitality and protection.

Meantime, beginning to feel entirely out of reach of my enemies, I experienced a lightness of heart, and a freedom of breathing, to which I had for some time been a stranger. It was rapture to me to roam at liberty through a plain without visible boundary, as over a trackless sea, where I might steer my course in any direction, or make for any point I chose, unimpeded by fence or hinderance, and only guided while the day lasted, by the course of the sun, and when the dusk came on,

by the glittering constellations which seemed to succeed to his glorious employment.

"Here," thought I, "ends the domain of civilised man,—of that man whose greater polish of surface only conceals greater hardness of heart, and who only receives a smoother edge to inflict deeper wounds. Here gilded daggers, silken bowstrings, and honied poisons no longer dance around my steps: here the name of a Sultan ceases to sanction measures which his mind never conceived, and the shadow of a Visier to smite men whom his own arm cannot reach: here no one obeys a sovereign he never saw, or is bound by laws he never heard of: here man will give, and woman will deny: here no walls are raised to keep travellers out, nor are tolls demanded for letting them in: no one here legally detains the property of the stranger, nor churlishly avoids his person. Here I may consider all things my eyes embrace as my own; and in a succession of short easy saunters, roam free as air unto my journey's end!"

At this period of my reverie, out started from behind a little knoll a fierce looking Bedoween, who, couching his lance against my breast, haughtily bade me stop. This was unexpected, and disagreeably interrupted my exultation at my newly acquired freedom of motion. The Arab pointed to a small group of goat-skin tents, which I had taken for low mounds of earth, as to the place where I

must go, whether I chose or not, and give an account of my views and proceedings. Seeing my opponent thus strongly backed, I thought it as well for the present to waive my privilege of unrestrained liberty, and to make a friend of him ere he had leisure to treat me as an enemy. I therefore jumped off my horse, flung my pistols to the ground, and calling myself his guest, laid hold of his girdle. Disarmed by this act of submission, he changed his threatening tone into milder language, bade me welcome, and offered to conduct me to the schaich. So rapid indeed was in his breast the transition from hostile to hospitable feelings, that he insisted by the way on his right to entertain me himself, in consequence of his having been the first of his troop to see me; and could only be diverted from his purpose, by my stating that I had special business with the chief.

At the entrance of the most roomy tent in the camp, sat, on his wicker stool, surrounded by a number of naked children squatted on the ground, this eminent personage. Busily engaged in teaching a favourite grandson to hurl a hollow reed, in imitation of the heavier spear,—too unwieldy as yet for his infant arm,—the countenance of the sire seemed to radiate with rapturous delight at the feats of his anxious pupil; and his coal black eye, still sparkling with the fire of youth, shone the brighter from its contrast with his snow-white

beard,—the valued mark of his advanced age. On seeing me unexpectedly stand before him, he gave a start of surprise; but soon recovering his sedate, composed look, and seeming slightly to blush for his momentary confusion, he politely returned my salute; and when, having previously stated my wish to pass the night in his camp, I claimed his protection as a defenceless wanderer, my double request was granted with courteous readiness. The schaich's civility stopped not here: calling out to a female occupied in the right-hand division of the tent, and and whose exterior—as she peeped from under the carpet which concealed her employment—seemed the least of her merits: "Zeineb," cried he, "a stranger is come to us; make haste and bake some bread:" to which injunction Zeineb only replied by setting to work. "This beginning," said I to myself, "augurs well! Bread once broken with my host, I am safe under his roof."

A few minutes sufficed for the diligent housewife to produce her handiwork in the shape of large flat cakes, with the distinctive mark of her own industrious palm left impressed on the surface. These, with some sour camel's milk, and other equally primitive dainties, were set out before me, and I fell to. Soon seeing me sated: "now go to repose," said the schaich.—"When rested, I no longer shall hesitate to ask you who you are, whence come, and whither going!" This respite gave me pleasure.

I made myself a bolster of a dromedary's pillion, and lying down, soon fell asleep.

On again awaking, I found the stars already twinkling in the firmament, as I did in their sockets the inquisitive eyes of a dozen notables of the tribe, ranged in a circle round the schaich to hear my story. I took my seat beside them, and expressed my readiness to attend to their questions. The answers remained in my own hands. What might be the politics of the party was as yet wholly unknown to me, and it seemed thus far equally unsafe to own whom I fled from, or whom I wished to join. "I am a Turkish officer," said I; "—come from Bagdad, and journeying to El-Hassa."

This seemed to surprise my hearers. "Stranger," cried a little shrivelled old man, with a shrewd distrustful countenance, and a harsh grating voice, "tell us, pray, what particular motive can induce you, thus alone as you are, to prefer the dangerous and difficult road of the desert, to the easy way by Basra, Sobier, Graïn, and Katif, which in eighteen or twenty days at most would be sure to bring you to your destination?"

The observation had a something so just and pertinent in it, as to be rather appalling. "I am a lover of difficulties," said I, laughing. "My soul contracts a rust in ease: a few rubs serve to keep it bright. Besides, I wished for an oppor-

tunity of paying homage to the virtues of the Bedowees."

The party were too civil to tell me to my face that they believed this whole flourish a lie; but I read it in their looks. They said, "they hoped my difficulties might not exceed my wishes, and that their virtues might answer my expectations;" whereupon—the night advancing—they took their leaves, and went to their respective homes.

As soon as I remained alone with my host: "Osmanlee," cried he in an earnest tone, "you conceal your true design. And yet, why should you disguise it? By giving us your confidence, you would secure our good offices. Believe me; it is not from frivolous curiosity I speak: schaich Mansoor wants not topics for idle talk. Your own welfare makes me anxious that those just gone from this abode, if they have no real grounds for mistrusting you, should not be led to harbour unfounded suspicions;—above all, that those should not thwart your views from mere ignorance, who, if confided in, might assist them effectually. Should, however, the avowal of your object be distressing to your feelings, remain silent. I urge you no further."

There was in the tone as well as in the matter of this speech a something not only so earnest but so affectionate, as half to unlock the secret cells of my heart. "Mansoor," said I, "a soldier in Room, I

fought the Sultan's battles in the name of the Prophet: I came to Bagdad's Pasha neither wholly destitute of rank, nor quite unknown to fame; yet I was slighted, or, if noticed at all, it was by a proud kehaya, only to have snares laid against my life. From these I fly; from these I seek shelter in the depths of the desert."

"And of this," cried Mansoor, "you feared to apprise me? How unjustly! If the supreme chief, the Kbir of Montefih himself, the daring Hameed—vulnerable as he is on the side where his peasantry or his flocks penetrate within the pale of Turkestan,—yet only pays Suleiman an unwilling allegiance, can you suppose that the lesser schaichs of his house, roaming so much deeper in the desert, should feel desirous to espouse the resentment, just or unjust, of every creature of the Sultan? Ah! so far from this being the case, rest assured that, if as a mere stranger we greet you with good will, as a sufferer by Achmet you may command our utmost services. The only risk you might run would be that of our suspecting a better understanding to exist between you and the kehaya than you avow, and the grievance you talk of to be only a feint, through means of which to draw out and to discover our secret sentiments. I still remember too well how Achmet, by calumniating me and my neighbour Beni-Tamim to each other, was near making the friends—the brothers of early youth—

offer each other in old age the cup of perdition! But even with this example imprinted on my mind, my heart rejects such a thought, and you shall witness that we pay Suleiman the tribute of our herds, not of our feelings."

"But why," said I—interrupting the Schaich's harangue—"with such proofs of treachery on the part of the Sultan's delegates, not prefer the security of an open rupture to the dangers of a secret enmity? Why not renounce at once all allegiance to Suleiman?"

"Ah!" replied Mansoor, "fate forbids my numbering myself among those chiefs so entirely beyond the Pasha's grasp, as to have nothing whatever to fear from his resentment. My subjects live not all yet in the portable tent; move not all yet from place to place, free and unconstrained as the antelope. Many of my vassals, fixed by the attraction of a richer soil, have driven deep in the ground the stakes on which rest their stationary huts, and, like plants, adhere to the clod of earth which their habitations compass. I myself, permitted for nine months of the year to forget that Suleiman exists, am obliged annually, during the three moons employed in collecting the contributions on my more distant tenants allured within his jurisdiction, to refresh my remembrance of his being, and to pay him my tithe of the monies I collect, and of the homage I receive."

At the thoughts of these periodically returning burthens of vassalage, a cloud seemed to overcast the schaich's countenance. Its serenity, however, soon returned, as, resuming his discourse, he added with increased animation;—"but I too, with my liability to incur wounds, possess my power to sting. Not only for every injury done to my few stationary tenants, can I retaliate tenfold on the Pasha's wholly immoveable population: I can refuse the escorts and the beasts of burthen, wanted for the conveyance of his goods and the safety of his pilgrims: I can, if his heavily armed troops should venture into the desert, leave my battles to be fought by thirst and by famine, by the stifling sands and by the fearful simoom; I can commit to the power of the elements the protection of Mansoor.—Therefore, O stranger, since I now know who you are, rest secure; and may soft slumbers keep locked your already closing eyelids the remainder of this night! To-morrow, in honour of your coming, falls the fatted sheep."

There was nothing in this conversation with Mansoor calculated to disturb the repose to which I soon most willingly retired: accordingly, it lasted, as little interrupted by irksome waking thoughts as by troublesome dreams, until broad daylight. My first care on getting up was to edify my host by the unction of my morning prayer; my next buisness to renew the evening's talk. I wanted to bring him on the subject of the Wahhabees.

At first he rather hung back—apprehensive, no doubt, of committing himself: but the respectful terms in which I at all hazards mentioned the new sect, induced him at last to become more unreserved.

" Removed," said he, " as I am from the Ared, and on the borders of Irak, any avowed union with the sons of Wahhab would, in the present stage of their progress, be of little advantage to them, and of certain detriment to myself. It must draw upon my head the wrath of Suleiman, without ensuring me the support of Abd-ool-Azeez. Besides, a man of my years wants repose during the few days God still grants him to live,—were it only to prepare for death; and when my earthly race shall be run, and the domain of the Wahhabees shall have made nearer approaches to my resting-place, it will then be for my children to see in how far they may think it expedient to join the standard of the new sectaries more openly: but, though a sunnee in name, my religious sentiments have, in reality, always claimed kindred with those of Abd-ool-Wahhab. Bigotry therefore raises not its insuperable barrier between me and his followers, and when all other barriers, shall fall, and the opposite floods come near, they must of their own accord run into each other."

The only thing which, after this candid confession of Mansoor's sentiments, still prevented me from disclosing without restraint my own designs, was the presence of his youngest child,—a boy of

ten or twelve years of age, who, leaning against his father, and alternately fixing his keen eye on which-ever of us spoke, seemed with out-stretched ears to catch our words almost ere they fell from our lips, and imbibed them as the thirsting plant drinks the summer dews. "Might it not be well," whispered I therefore to the schaich, "to send to his sports this watchful lad, whose lips move not, but whose mind devours all we say?"

"Does it?" cried Mansoor; "Ah! then by all means let him stay: let him attend to the converse of men, that by so doing he may learn to become one! Fear not his indiscretion: he has left the women's chamber; like ourselves he has learnt to fetter his tongue."—On such a commendation from his parent a Greek boy would have spoken to assure me of his silence; the young Arab only looked his delight, in the bright glow which suffused his downy cheek.

I now freely confessed to Mansoor that my destination was Derayeh. "My acquaintance with the plans and resources of the government of Bagdad," said I, "might be useful, and my wish to see them marred, must at all events be acceptable."

Hereupon Mansoor ruminated a little:—at last, "since such is your design," cried he, "I think I may do a thing which will forward it, and be of advantage to both. For some time past I have been

thinking of sending to Abd-ool-Azeez a token of good-will. I shall avail myself of this opportunity. The bearers of my offerings may be your guides and escorts, and you, the bearer of my words of amity."

This mission I most gladly accepted; and the preparations were immediately begun. The difficulty lay not in mustering the gifts:—they had been long collected for the purpose. The most prominent consisted of a handsome blood mare, "able"—observed Mansoor—"though without wings, to fly;" an abbah tissued with gold; some rich Damascus blades, and some choice Persian stuffs from the markets of Basra: but the spoke in the wheel seemed to be the complimental epistle. Mansoor's secretary was become a recording angel in the regions above: Mansoor himself never had shone as a penman; and, as to his vassals at present in the camp, they were more remarkable for wielding the reed whose point is steeped in blood, than that whose end is dipped in ink. My whole embassy was on the point of falling to the ground for want of a scribe.

In this dilemma I bethought myself of my own *savoir-faire*. It is true it extended not, in eastern characters, beyond the most ordinary Nesh-khi sort. For want however of a more skilful hand, I offered mine, such as it was; not indeed to write in Arabic;

—that was out of all question,—but to indite an epistle in Turkish.

After a little hesitation my services were accepted. I was told the substance of what I was to pen, and left to give it my own form. For this purpose I retired to the most secluded corner of the tent, and sat down to my work. Alas! I soon felt that neither materials for writing, nor leisure to meditate, could carry me through with the task which I had so incautiously undertaken. The self-dubbed secretary sat poring on his shining sheet of paper, like a schoolboy at his theme, biting his nails, and not knowing what to write. At last a bright thought came to my relief. "Why not, where my Turkish lore failed me, eke it out with Greek, and conceal the scantiness of the substance under the exuberance of the ornament?"

By this expedient the manuscript was at last completed, and brought to the schaich. He looked it over with an air of astonishment. "I do not," said he,—twirling his turban round and round on his head, and straining his eyes to make out a sentence,—"pretend to be conversant in Turkish writing; but I have sometimes seen the penmanship of the Divan, and certainly it never looked like this!"

"No more it could," I boldly answered. "People in the north are constantly changing their fashions. They now think it seemly in the Othoman chancery

to combine the Greek characters with the Persian phraseology. But if this new mode displeases you, —give back the scrawl, and let me tear it!"

"No, no," earnestly cried the old schaich, holding my hand from executing the sentence. "The letter has already cost us trouble enough. If it should not be very intelligible, Allah-akbar: God is great! my presents will explain its meaning." So saying, he dipped his seal in ink, and impressed it on the paper. It was then rolled up, inclosed in a case sewed by Zeineb's own henna-tipped fingers, and handed over to my care.

Meantime the fatted sheep was already smoking in the platter. Invited to the feast, all the chiefs of the camp flocked to the schaich's tent. An inferior sort of self-invited guests followed. None were refused that came; and each sating his appetite in the order of his arrival, and then retiring to make room for others, the tide of comers and goers only ceased when the carcass was stripped to the bone.

Now commenced the bustle of my departure. In order to elude the hawk's eye of the roving freebooter, I enveloped my Greek features after the country fashion in a striped handkerchief, a gift of the fair Zeineb. The horses were led out, and the guides sallied forth.

"These trusty servants," cried Mansoor, "will

take you the shortest and safest road to my neighbour the schaich (I think he said) of Shoreïfath. Coming as you do from me, he will receive you well, and, when you leave him, will give you a fresh escort. From camp to camp you will thus finally reach Derayeh. Here and there, however, you will find perilous passes. All the kabiles are not equally friendly: some might be named with whom meeting is fighting; and lately the combats have been so sanguinary, that the private vengeance to be sated on both sides leaves little hopes of a reconciliation. Mind therefore every where to inquire, and always to be prepared both for defence and flight. But on this subject my friend Nasser, more advanced in the desert than your servant, will give you more pointed directions."—Then, taking me aside, and charging me to inform Abd-ool-Azeez how well disposed he was to his cause, but how ill situated to show that disposition, except by his backwardness in assisting Suleiman, the schaich held the stirrup for me to mount, and bade me farewell. I set forward just as the sun dropped behind the horizon, and, followed by the Arabs, the led mare, and the camels which carried the presents, slowly proceeded on.

The month of March was just opening, and the heat, save only at mid-day, still easily borne. The verdant carpet of the desert, bruised by the horses' hoofs, emitted at night its most aromatic

exhalations; and the plants and shrubs in full bloom sent forth invisible clouds of the most powerful perfumes. So deep appeared in the morning the dye with which the scarlet anemone and purple hyacinth enamelled the blushing plain unto the utmost verge of the horizon, that the rosy tint of the dawn only seemed their fainter reflection cast upon the blue sky. Every where our cattle found abundant pasture, and our own appetite feasted on milk of an ambrosial flavour.

Two short days journey and a half, unclouded by any danger or molestation, took us to Nasser's camp. It is true that now and then, like a single fleece in the azure sky, appeared far off in the desert some solitary Bedoween, seeming to rove in quest of plunder: but none came within hearing distance, except one small party; and this, the moment it recognised the Arabs of schaich Mansoor, again quietly walked off, and vanished in space.

The same hospitality which had marked the reception of Mansoor, shone pre-eminent in that of Nasser. In him I even found, with less loquacity, a more ready frankness. All within and around him savoured stronger of the freedom of the desert. The wife of Mansoor had only suffered herself to be perceived: the consort of Nasser came forth, and met our gaze undaunted. Not only she permitted me to see her features unveiled, but she very minutely scrutinised my own. A native of the

west was, I suppose, a novel sight to the lady: for my person and my attire seemed equally to attract her attention. Indeed her investigations became by degrees so close, that, to my great relief, the husband thought fit at last to interfere. I must otherwise have been, by little and little, completely undressed. Even after she had been compelled reluctantly to retire, I heard the fair Farzané (or whatever was her name) loudly complain to her sympathizing maids, of the shackles imposed upon her inquisitive spirit.

The attentions of the wife did not prevent the husband from pressing me to stay beyond the time I had limited; but it was done with that blended warmth and discretion, which left me an entire liberty to accept or to refuse. Indeed, combining with the energy of the desert all the politeness of the courtier, the schaich was like a rock covered with flowers. Seeing me determined to proceed, he gave me all the assistance in his power, and advised me by means of a little circuit to avoid his next neighbour, with whom he was on indifferent terms; then, having supplied me with a double provision of rice and dates and with an increased escort, he wished me a prosperous journey, and tarried at the entrance of his tent while I remained in sight.

For the purpose of eluding as much as possible all observation, I now travelled only at night. Be-

fore the dawn arose, the body of the caravan used to dive into one of those hollows which break the surface of the Arab plain; while only one of its members, lying down on the edge of the cavity, staid outside to keep watch. Thus we made way but slowly, and only at the end of five days march reached the encampment of schaich Amroo, chief of a tribe bound by the strongest ties of reciprocal services to that of Nasser. With this schaich, therefore, I determined to tarry two whole nights; a resolution for which I had to pay somewhat more than the cost of my entertainment.

As the blood mare sent by Mansoor to Abd-ool-Azeez had been declared on all hands perfectly irresistible, nothing was omitted to assist human weakness in withstanding her charms. No beauty in a harem could be more strictly watched, both on the road and at halting-places; where her conductor never lay down to sleep, until he had tied round his own waist one end of the chain of which the other end fastened the legs of his charge: but even that could not daunt the daring of an Arab—a stranger in Amroo's camp, and only attracted by the report of our arrival. Irresistibly smitten with the beauteous mare, he had actually succeeded in severing her fetters by means of a file, when, awakened by some accidental noise, her keeper started up, and caught the culprit in the fact.

The greater evil thus obviated, all that remained

to do was to prevent a lesser one still impending, by extorting from the thief his right to shove the burthen of the fine he had incurred on the shoulders of some innocent bystander, whom he might succeed to touch either with his person or his garment: and for this purpose the bastinado was without delay applied. Unfortunately, while every more wary Arab kept carefully aloof during the operation, I alone, attracted by my curiosity, and not knowing my danger, must obtrude my person, on purpose to meet the robber's skull-cap, thrown at me in the midst of the infliction which he himself was suffering. Hit by the villanous garment, I became in honour bound to pay the wearer's ransom: but in return for this good office I had the pleasure of hearing him recount all his former achievements to an admiring audience—delighted that I should so providentially have prevented his brilliant career from receiving a check. In short, if I had paid dearly, I had liberated a hero. In the desert a man's thefts are only called his gains.

On my next march we took such exceeding precautions to avoid a particular horde of doubtful character, that we walked right into the midst of it. The encampment had moved to the very spot which we supposed to be most safe from its intrusion, and to arrive at which we had been tacking all the way. A considerable sum was accordingly demanded of us for leave to proceed. "You escort," said the

spokesman, "strangers whom we distrust, and you carry goods which owe us a toll." This observation suggested to me the idea of ascertaining the virtue of my cipher, till then untried. "Let the chief himself," cried I, "come forward, and state his claims." This he presently did. Taking him by the wrist, I whispered in his ear the Wahhab watchword, and showed him the signet. At this sight he looked scared, kept his eyes for some time fixed on the awful talisman, and at last, waving his hand, "pass on," he cried in surly disappointment, —and immediately fell behind his grim and wondering attendants.

This incident greatly enhanced my importance among my own troop. Mansoor's Arabs now saw very clearly that I was some great personage, respected even in the heart of the desert; and they paid me additional deference. It went not however so far as to agree with me in an unqualified reprobation of the fines levied by the Bedoween on the passenger. "What the last schaich with whom we fell in had attempted was certainly very wrong, but what they themselves did was not the less perfectly right. Because people allowed themselves the free range of their own premises, was the door to be thrown open unconditionally to every intruding stranger? When the incautious traveller neglected to make his bargain, to be sure he was mulcted; sometimes even he was stripped to the skin: but

what then? were not those that undressed him the descendants of Ismaïl? Had not Ismaïl been unjustly disinherited by Ibrahim his father, and had not the posterity of Ismaïl an undoubted right to seize upon its lawful inheritance, in whatever hands it might have fallen?"—I attempted not to combat this argument. All I did was inwardly to pray that I might meet as few as possible of these disinherited children.

The remainder of the journey only offered a tiresome repetition of fatiguing marches and of tedious halts; of wells missed in one place and found filled up in another; of skirmishes and of flights. Our reception in the different camps varied throughout every intermediate degree between the most cordial friendship, and positive fighting: and so uninterrupted was the succession of expostulations, of threats, and of protestations, that, ere we had achieved half the way, my voice became almost extinct, and I had to contend for my rights in dumb show. Every tribe in whose vicinity we came supplied our caravan with some new member, glad of the opportunity to reach, under its protection, some neighbouring district; and as those who joined us constantly exceeded in number those that fell off, our troop at last grew formidable enough to awe an enemy of moderate strength. This was fortunate: for the further we advanced, the greater became the concupiscence excited by Mansoor's mares. Every

Arab on the road would gladly have given for them wife, children, and friends.

Before the end of the journey we had to encounter an enemy more formidable than any Arab tribe, not excepting the most savage of the desert: I mean the dread samiel. Our caravan was slowly pacing through the boundless plain—the horses' steps sounding more hollow than usual on the earth, and a more awful stillness reigning in the atmosphere. Suddenly a lurid glâre overspread the eastern extremity of the horizon, while a thick sulphureous mist arose from the ground, which—first revolving round and round in rapid eddies,—next mounted up to the sky, and finally overcast with threatening darkness the whole heavenly vault. At these terrific symptoms our Arabs turned pale, and goaded on our cattle with headlong hurry, in order, if possible, still to outrun the baleful blast. But in vain! Hoarsely murmuring, the hot stream swept the ground with frightful speed, and, anxiously as we quickened our pace, gained fast upon us. Perceiving themselves encompassed on all sides by its fiery breath, our people shrieked with terror, our very cattle howled with instinctive anguish, and all that had life fell flat on the ground, burying nose and mouth deep in the shifting sands,—in hopes that the envenomed current, gliding over the prostrate limbs, might not approach the vitals.

Near half an hour did the raging hurricane keep

us thus riveted to the ground, without daring to move, or to speak, or scarce to draw breath; and soon entirely covered with a fine impalpable dust, which not only penetrated into every fold of our garments, but, as we afterwards found, into every inmost recess of our boxes and luggage,—when at last our beasts of burthen, as if awaking from a profound trance, began to shake themselves, and, by all again of one accord rising upon their legs, gave the signal that the danger was past. Every creature now stood up that was able, and thanked Providence for his escape. Only one member of the caravan, a foreign merchant,—too tardy perhaps in prostrating himself before an unknown enemy,—rose no more. On approaching, we already found him breathless, and weltering in the black muddy blood that gushed from his nose, mouth, and ears. My guides lost no time in committing his corrupt mass to the earth, ere the limbs should detach themselves from the swelling trunk; then heaped some stones over the spot, to protect it from the ounce and jackall, and—these short rites and simple monument completed—again proceeded onwards.

This catastrophe closed the adventures of the desert. Soon after we began to descry before us, like a cloud of a more benign and promising aspect, the distant mountains of the Nedjd and the domain of the Wahhabees; and with rapturous delight our long procession by degrees entered verdant valleys

filled with date and lemon trees, intermixed with towns and villages. After resting at Ramah, at Makren, and in other places, equally inviting by their situation and their produce, we at last reached Derayeh, the capital.

CHAPTER VII.

No sooner had my person, and Mansoor's presents, been made fit to present themselves before Abd-ool-Azeez, than I requested an audience in all due diplomatic form. This was immediately granted. It took place in the open air, at the gates of what I must needs call—more from the dignity of its tenant than its own—a palace; and the schaich received me squatted on a rush mat. Notwithstanding his advanced age of seventy-five, he still displayed good features, and a handsome, though somewhat harsh and forbidding countenance; and through all the affected meanness of his dress, shone a lofty and commanding air. I felt a sensation of awkwardness at the richness of my own apparel, so much exceeding that of the high personage whose favour I came to seek. On this subject, however, I might have spared myself any uneasiness. The schaich seemed to contemplate my glitter—if noticed by him at all—with perfect indifference; and when I presented to him the gifts of Mansoor, he cast upon them the careless survey of a man, who considers such things as beneath his attention. The letter certainly puz-

zled him: he seemed to feel as if it ought not to do so, and he saved himself by his supercilious glance the embarrassment of owning that he knew not what to make of it. When at the conclusion of my harangue I repeated to him the sentence, and showed the signet, imparted to me by his emissary at Bagdad, his brow unfurled, and his features relaxed into a more affable expression. Still he remained, after my speech was concluded, a few moments musing and silent. At last: "Stranger," said he, in a slow and deliberate manner; "wonder not if an old warrior, accustomed to treachery and deceit, should not feel immediate confidence in Mansoor's protestations. If the light of truth has really penetrated his heart, the Lord be thanked, especially by himself, who must be the greatest gainer,—since the choicest blessings of Heaven, both here and hereafter, never fail to reward sincere conversion: but I know the faith of Turks, and I distrust the very Arab whose breath mingles often with theirs. Mansoor's artful conduct may have deceived you, and it is only on trial that I shall think myself secure of his sincerity. The decisive hour," added he —suddenly starting up from his seat—"is perhaps not far off, when all who appear not on our side shall be treated as if they had risen against us. The spears already are pointing, and, at a distance beyond the ken of other eyes, I already perceive the war dust

darken the sky. As to you, stay among us. In the midst of my own children no treachery can reach me; and I shall have pleasure in trying your talents."

I expressed my thanks; and fancying that the schaich, during our conversation, had eyed my pistols with peculiar complacency, resolved upon the sacrifice of these showy weapons, to conciliate his good will. Arabs of all ages are like children, and always think most desirable the thing that is withheld from them. Thence Abd-ool-Azeez showed himself much more gratified with my pair of pistols, than with all the rich presents of Mansoor. He immediately directed that my expenses should be defrayed, and, recommending his new guest to the care of his attendants, mounted his horse and rode off, followed by a numerous and motley suite.

Scarcely had he proceeded a dozen yards, when just at the turning of the street he was met by a young man also on horseback, arriving from the country, and like himself attended by a considerable retinue. The opinion which the stranger's air and state gave me of his importance, was fully confirmed by the reception which he met with from the schaich of the Wahhabees. This chief—who seemed not in general to waste his courtesies—immediately turned back with the new comer, and when both were dismounted, there commenced between them a conflict of civilities, partly in speech and partly in dumb show, which lasted several minutes.

Each repeated the same inquiries and the same protestations a dozen times, and each touched a dozen times the hand of the other. In the midst however of this mutual assault of politeness, I still thought I could discern in Abd-ool-Azeez's manner a sort of conscious superiority; and the imposing reserve which tempered his professions, formed a strong contrast with the visible eagerness of tone and action of the stranger. This latter, they told me, was the schaich of a smaller kabilé, connected with the chief of the Wahhabees by the double tie of kindred and of vassalage.

Presently the two personages sat down in the court of the palace, and seemed preparing to discuss an affair of importance. The fear of appearing curious made me retire out of hearing—a ceremony which seemed entirely waived by the rest of the bystanders. The conference soon became animated. Gesticulation, which is never spared among the Arabs, rose higher and higher; opinions seemed more and more to clash; and such at last became the loudness of vociferation and the violence of gesture, that, from expecting to see the two chiefs devour each other with caresses, I now began to apprehend the same result from very different preliminaries. In the midst of my surmises, some words which reached me where I stood, struck me as relating to myself. I now accused my stupidity in tarrying so long to guess the subject of the dis-

pute. The chiefs had met in perfect amity; they had sat down to converse with the utmost good humour; and the only subject of difference which could have arisen must be *my* visit, *my* object, and *my* merits. Nothing seemed so clear as that one of the schaichs was my advocate, and the other my enemy. At this discovery all my former discretion forsook me, and, as the audience increased every instant in numbers and in boisterousness, I resolved to mix with the crowd, and to advance within hearing. The first words which distinctly struck my ear were—an unqualified sentence of death.

A thunder-bolt falling at my feet could not have more astounded me. Had the measure been practicable I would immediately have sought my safety in flight. But fearful to betray my fear, and to draw upon me the eyes of the multitude, by attempting to force my way through their closely wedged ranks, I was contented with making myself as small as possible, in order to elude observation. With a throbbing heart I continued to listen:—but my palpitation prevented me from hearing another word, and all I could do was to watch the looks of the disputants. After the hawk's eye of Abd-ool-Azeez had several times wandered round and round the crowd as if seeking its prey, I at last saw it pounce upon my features, and from that moment remain stedfast. "It is all over with me now!" thought I; and indeed an Arab to my right made

but too intelligible a sign to another on my left, that no mercy must be expected. This confirmation of my surmises had made me well nigh sink to the ground, when a third Arab who stood before me, shrugging up his shoulders, cried out; "his fate is sealed;" and then with a deep sigh added: "alas! poor Omar!"

Oh! how I felt relieved on hearing that death was to be Omar's portion, not mine. My heart dilated, my lungs expanded, and my blood again began to flow. Ashamed of my silly apprehensions, I stretched myself, resumed my erect posture, and felt as if I rose the whole height of my head above the surrounding multitude, on which I now cast all round a leisurely and complacent look.

"Who is this Omar," said I to my neighbour, "whose fate seems to excite such interest?"

"The boast of his tribe, the flower of his family, and the pride of his parents," answered the man, —wiping the tears from his face.

"And for these offences," resumed I, "doomed to inevitable death?"

"'Tis too certain," replied my informer. "His liberality excited the envy of the ferocious Mookfar, who, only intent upon tempting Providence by the daily recension of his growing riches, never admitted mortal man to partake of his goods. Wroth that Omar, less wealthy, should yet be more respected, he added outrage to jealousy, every where

insulted the object of his hatred, and even lifted his lance against him; until at last Omar, in defence of his own life, took the life of his foe. Hereupon, lest Mooktar's powerful relations should sacrifice justice to pride, he absconded, and his antagonist's friends swore to revenge their slaughtered kinsman on whatever friend of the homicide should come within the reach of their spears. From this sanguinary resolve they now in part desist. They agree to accept a ransom for the lives of Omar's kindred; but from their mercy Omar himself, of course, remains excluded. If found, he still must fall. Ibn-Aly, the strange schaich, himself related to Omar, came in hopes of obtaining the youth's inclusion in this compromise. He has just been representing in the strongest terms to our chief—to whom Mooktar owed vassalage—the intolerable provocations, on one side, and the long patience, and at last, the unpremeditated retort, on the other: but in vain! Even Abd-ool-Azeez cannot compel Mooktar's friends to renounce the price of blood—the right they have on Omar's life. Behold them all ranged in a row behind our schaich, hissing like scotched snakes: see the looks of rage they dart on Omar's kinsmen ranged on the opposite side behind their own chief Aly. Does it not seem as if each troop were only waiting for the signal to fall on the other like beasts of prey, mad with the thirst for blood?"

This account of my neighbour's was confirmed by the words which Abd-ool-Azeez now uttered. "Omar," said he, "has incurred capital punishment, and, while he remains concealed, the sentence cannot be mitigated. If he have any thing to allege in his defence, let him come forward; let him plead his own cause; let him submit, should he fail in proving his innocence, to the wrath his crime deserves.—In fine, let him seek the grant of his forfeited life in the generosity of his adversaries, and not in the impotence of their resentment."

"I understand," replied with a bitter smile the strange schaich; "Omar is to be, by a false hope of pardon, drawn out of his concealment, in order that his enemies, spurning his defence, may at their leisure riot in his destruction."

Abd-ool-Azeez gave the stranger a daunting look, but coolly proceeded. "I doubt not," rejoined he, "that the kinsmen of the deceased would pledge themselves for the safety of the murderer, not only while the pleading lasted, but until he were again conducted beyond the pale of this district. What say they?" exclaimed he, looking all round—as if to invite the party concerned to confirm his supposition.

"We would, we would;" answered several voices from among the cluster of Mooktar's relations; and this was the first symptom, on their part, of a return to feelings less implacable. But what be-

came the universal astonishment when, upon the strength of these vague exclamations, a young man of the most prepossessing appearance, after struggling to break away from the followers of Aly, at last was seen to spring forward, and to proclaim himself the actually present Omar! Submitting only to concealment in compliance with his friends' desires, this noble-minded youth had impatiently brooked the crouching attitude of fear and disguise. He thought the circumstances of his case needed only be known, to make his most implacable antagonists own the guiltlessness of his conduct; and the confused and tumultuous assent of some of Mooktar's kinsmen to the proposal thrown out by the supreme schaich, he had considered a challenge, which his character no longer allowed him to disregard. But Omar wholly trusted to the dictates of justice: he had left out of his reckoning the suggestions of passion. When the brothers of the deceased,—those who most reluctantly had yielded even to the partial compromise in favour of the innocent friends of the guilty Omar,—saw darkening the ground on which they stood, and defying their anger while within reach of their poniards, the youth himself whom they had so long and so fruitlessly sought, they could not contain their fury. Drawing the already sharpened dagger out of his bosom, the eldest of the party sprung forward like a tiger upon

his unsuspecting prey, and plunged the shining steel deep into Omar's side, ere the attendants of the schaich had leisure to watch, or presence of mind to arrest his heavy arm:—the blood spouted from the wound upon its very author!

At this sight the prince sprang up; and, rending his vestment: "Friends of Mooktar," he cried, "what have you done? Under my own eyes, in my very court, thus to break the faith just pledged, to perjure yourselves, to set me at nought, and to disgrace our whole tribe!—O Arab, Arab! Time, while it lasts, never can wipe out this foul stain!"—and he beat his naked breast.

"Our assent," answered, deeply blushing, the almost breathless offender, "only rested on the solemn assurance that none of the murderer's friends knew what spot on earth was defiled by his presence: you see, he mocked our wrath from the very midst of their troop."

"And what of that!" resumed the schaich. "To me you had committed the task of procuring you justice; and all know whether I fulfilled my trust. Speak, foes of Omar, as well as his friends, if I showed any undue partiality. But you have infringed your promise; you have trodden upon your engagement; and if Omar dies, murder has been requited by equal murder. Your own blood will have to atone for the blood which you spilt."

[library stamp]

These words were heard by Omar. Weak as he was, and expecting his wound to prove mortal, yet could he not brook to rest the fairness of his own character merely on the foul deed of his adversaries. He insisted on making the defence which before had been granted him, and proving his entire innocence. The schaich gave the requisite permission, and, in order that his almost extinct voice might be heard, immediately imposed on all around him the strictest silence.

Supported by two of his nearest relations, Omar now advanced, and in words few and faint, but most clear and impressive, stated the manifold insults he had received, and the daily forbearance he had shown, until provocations baffling all human patience had extorted the chastisement, which even then had not been intended to end in Mooktar's death. Few were those among Omar's hearers who, when he concluded his speech, pronounced him not in their hearts far more than merely acquitted:—worthy of applause, of reward, of every honour.

But among those was not the supreme schaich. Whether prompted by extreme love of justice, or by a latent bias toward his own tribe: "Omar," exclaimed he, to the dismay of all;—"you have chosen to rest your safety on the merits of your case, and have compelled me to sit in judgment on one whom I could have wished to save. I own you deserving of pity, but I cannot pronounce you en-

titled to pardon. That word may not pass my lips."

Then, turning to the kinsmen of Mooktar: "Friends of the slain," continued he, "I am going to deliver into your hands that which, though in part too hastily anticipated, yet in its whole is your due. I am going to give you full possession of your victim. If, not satisfied with having drawn blood for blood, you must have the entire certainty of taking life for life, achieve your work of vengeance; plunge deeper your daggers into the heart of Omar; and secure yourselves against any remaining possibility of his surviving his wound, and boasting of his deed."

At these cruel words, Omar, exhausted with agitation and with loss of blood, fell senseless on the pavement; his friends uttered mournful groans, and the leader of his enemies having whetted his knife on the steps of the palace, stooped to perform the last act of revenge, by plunging his poniard to the heart of the already speechless youth:—when Abd-ool-Azeez, yet holding back his hand, in a louder voice continued:——

"Having thus," said he, "performed my duty both as arbitrator and as judge; let me however add this one thing more, that the act I am forced to permit must perpetuate between two distinguished families the rancour just kindled, and doom their enmity only to end in the destruction of the tribes to

which they belong. I therefore denounce, as ruler of these realms, as minister of the Most High, and as apostle of the only pure faith, on whoever shall draw down upon his country an evil of such magnitude, my eternal malediction. Cursed be the hand that shall advance to extinguish the embers of an already fleeting life; cursed the lip that shall from an already agonised enemy withhold a free and unqualified forgiveness!"

"Yes; cursed be that hand, and cursed be those lips!" now re-echoed in unison from all the beholders—save one, who himself however, as if already struck by the anathema, and no longer daring to oppose the universal impulse, now with a ghastly look and quivering lip faintly uttered: "take my pardon;" then overwhelmed with disappointment and rage, fell back among his troop,—and disappeared.

Shouts of joy now arose from every quarter. Of the dead Mooktar all further thoughts were dismissed, and the still breathing Omar alone continued the object of general solicitude. Abd-ool-Azeez assigned him a small abode near the palace; and thither the youth was carried on the shoulders of his friends, but with little hopes of saving his life. In honour of the reconciliation between the two families the supreme chief ordered a sumptuous feast. While the banquet was preparing he presented me to his kinsman. "This stranger," said he, "is

come to bend the knee with us to the Most High in the rightful worship. He abandons the luxuries of the Turks for the frugal life of the Wahhabees, and brings with him the sciences taught in cities, that they may fructify in our camps." Then, turning to me:—"the Othomans," added he, "boast of having once conquered these regions. Their armies crossed them indeed—but as the arrow cleaves the air, without leaving a trace. The Wahhabees soon shall march through the land of the Turks: but they shall go as the plough goes through the ground,—cutting up all it meets in its way, and leaving behind it an indelible track. In vain, to conceal his wrinkles, old Suleiman paints his care-worn face: at the bare sound of our name the paleness of fear overcasts all his features, and proclaims the true feelings of his bosom through the lying crimson that glows on his cheek!"

The repast being ready, the various groups of guests sat down round the loaded platters, according to their rank. Mine, being that of a foreign embassador, procured me the honour of a place near the schaichs. Scarce had I, according to the country fashion, thrust my fingers in the dish, when an Arab, so enveloped in his haïck that his figure was not more cognizable than his face, walked into the room, with great solemnity approached the place where I sat, put the hem of my garment to his lips, and his lips to my ear, and in a whisper in-

terrupted by loud and frequent sobs, invited me to leave my dinner, and to go where he should precede me. He most obstinately indeed refused to explain who he was, and for what purpose he desired my company, but there appeared something so earnest and impressive in his manner, that I could not say nay; and though my neighbours pressed me to stay, and loudly inveighed against the unmannerly Arab who called a new comer away from the feast at its very beginning, I followed my mysterious herald, and bade him lead the way.

Contenting himself with thanking me for yielding to his entreaty, by a silent but earnest pressure of the hand, he conducted me to a hovel at the bottom of a narrow lane. There, gently opening the door of a back room, into which he preceded me on tip-toe, he ushered me amongst a large assembly of persons of both sexes, so intent upon the object around which they were collected, that he was obliged to push them aside in order to show me where lay, on a species of litter, wan, pale, and seeming at the last gasp, the wounded Omar.

The party, assembled round this poor youth, were his parents and relations, who, when Ibn-Aly his cousin set out for Derayeh to negotiate his safety, had not been able to prevent him—impatient as he felt under the imputation of cowardice—from following, mixed among his kinsman's suite; and had therefore in their turn also followed, in order

if possible to check his impetuosity, or at least to support his valour:—a circumstance which enabled them, after the imprudence he committed, immediately to come forward to his assistance, and to afford him all the care his situation required. Though his wound seemed not to have reached the vital parts, yet had Mooktar's dagger gone deep in his breast, and a high fever and extreme debility rendered his state to all appearances so critical, that his friends felt the utmost apprehension for his life. Hearing that a stranger had arrived at Derayeh, skilled in the knowledge of the west, they determined to request his advice; and it was the father—the afflicted Beder himself—who came for me to the palace. The fear of marring the hilarity of the feast by the sadness of his looks had made him conceal his face, and the dread of incurring the reproaches of the host for taking away his guest had induced him to keep closed his lips. Even now that, out of hearing of the mirthful board and arrived with me near the bed of sickness, he attempted to speak, he could only point in silence to his son, lying almost insensible on his couch—and moved his lips in vain to request my assistance. No sound came, and the tears which mechanically trickled down his cheeks belied the look of composure forced upon his struggling features. As to his wife and daughters, they attempted not even to suppress their emotion. Casting away all Mus-

sulman reserve, they convulsively grasped my hand, covered it with kisses, and bathed it in tears. "Cure, ah cure our loved Omar!" they cried with heart-rending moans; "for we know that it is in your power."

This supposition was rather appalling; and the first thing I did was to disclaim every pretension to infallibility.

After that protest, which, however seriously uttered, met with but little credence, I walked up to the patient, and, surrounded by an immoveable and breathless circle, endeavoured to ascertain Omar's condition. The chief medicine which on due investigation his case seemed to require, was bodily rest and mental composure.

"Sir," said I therefore to the father, whose breath seemed suspended while I spoke, but whose eyes devoured my words, "the character in which I come to this country is that of envoy of schaich Mansoor, not of disciple of Ibn-Senna. What little skill in medicine I may possess was acquired as an object of curiosity, not as a means of profit. The gratuitousness of my assistance entitles me to stipulate before hand for the most implicit obedience to all my prescriptions."

"Order us to wrest from Aly's tomb his plumed turban," hereupon cried the father. "Command us to crawl on our bare knees to the Kaaba," exclaimed the mother. "Bid us renounce all the

honours of the married state," spoke, in faltering accents, the daughters.

"All these," I observed, "would be very difficult achievements, but of very little efficacy as a cure. A much easier proceeding might be of infinitely more advantage: namely, for the relations not to keep the patient in a constant fever by their alarms and their surmises; but to retire, to stay without the room, and not to re-enter it, except with my permission."

This prescription, however, was in itself much too easily obeyed, to have a chance of being enforced without the utmost difficulty. Nothing but the absolute certainty of losing their son, with which they were threatened, unless it were adhered to, could make the good people clear the chamber, and commit their dearest treasure to my sole unwatched care.

Left alone with my patient, I in a careless way mixed up a draught, and with an air of important solemnity composed a charm; pledged myself only for the efficacy of the amulet, but took care to see the potion drunk off to the last drop. The confidence in the spell, the composing nature of the medicine, and the quiet of the room, procured the youth a refreshing sleep, and when he awoke, he found his fever abated and his strength recruited. I now dressed his wound, gave him some liquid food, and, calling in his friends, showed them the improvement

in his looks. But so loud were their exclamations of joy, and so boisterous the blessings they bestowed on my ancestors for three generations back, that I soon turned them all out again. My part of Cerberus was unremittingly supported, until long intervals of tranquillity, and visits of an instant only, had removed all danger. When, owing to his good constitution, the youth became visibly convalescent, I stepped modestly forward to receive the thanks due to nature, for preserving the hopes of a powerful house;—and these were not withheld. Had I saved Omar only through dint of the most consummate skill and the most unwearied toil, the expressions of gratitude could not have been more ardent or more sincere.

CHAPTER VIII.

Abd-ool-Azeez had provided me at Derayeh with a lodging such as became a guest of my distinction. In fair weather it let in no rain, and in foul it stopped not the water from running out. My meals, which came ready dressed from the schaich's own kitchen, had at least one great merit; that of affording little excitement to intemperance. Now and then there arrived in single state, before or after my dinner, a plate of sweetmeats or a bowl of hoshab, as a more pointed mark of attention,—on which occasions I failed not to be in all the requisite ecstacies. The strictness of the Wahhabee tenets forbade my being entertained with bands of singers and dancers; but one might have fancied that I was expected myself to perform for the amusement of the curious, from the number that attended my levee every morning, ere I went out to pay my own court to the prince, or to visit my patient. With the schaich I used to talk of Suleiman, of his force, his policy, the intrigues of those who usurped his authority, and the cabals of those who coveted his succession. With Omar I used to handle a topic to me still more interesting: my own dear self. I

related to him every extraordinary object I had seen, and every strange adventure I had experienced.

No one could help loving the young Bedoween. Combining gentleness with spirit, and modesty with noble pride, his mind displayed in the midst of the desert, the cultivation of the college and the graces of a court. While lying on his bed of sickness he would make me hour after hour continue my narrations, though they often drew a deep sigh from his bosom; and, when my breath was exhausted, he would in his turn take up the discourse, and relate the history of his tribe and the vicissitudes of his family. What he loved most to expatiate upon, was the purity of his blood and the virtues of his parents: his eyes glistened on telling me how his father—abhorring the frequent divorces in vogue among the Arabs, and the sacrifice they made of lasting affections to transient enjoyments—had never had any wife but his mother; and how he himself proposed to follow his sire's good example. So exalted were his sentiments and so pleasing his conversation, that, when I shut my eyes, I sometimes could fancy I heard my friend Spiridion. Externals only differed; their hearts wore the same hue. Indeed, what all the sublime moral precepts of the young Greek, urged expressly for my benefit, could not effect, the simple expression of noble sentiments which dropped unintentionally from the artless

Arab, in great measure brought about:—they operated a real and important change in my own disposition,—for my heart was now softened by sorrow, and steadied by experience: and poets say that the clay must be moistened by the dews from heaven, ere it can imbibe the fragrance of the neighbouring rose.

What wonder then that the constant interchange between us, of varied information on my part, and of valuable principles on that of my patient, should by degrees have cemented between us a sincere and tender friendship. It acquired such intensity that, after the period had been fixed for Omar's return to El-Gaddeh, the place of his residence, he found means to linger at Derayeh some time longer on the score of debility, in order to put off the evil day of our separation; and when he no longer could urge any new excuse for staying, he made it his last solemn request, on taking leave of the great schaich, that I might be permitted to accompany him to his home, and to stay under his roof. This favour the prince was prevailed upon, after some demur, to grant; but only for a limited period, and on the express condition that I should hold myself in readiness to return to Derayeh the moment I was summoned.

At El-Gaddeh and in Beder's abode, I need not say that I felt more at ease than I had done at Derayeh, fed from the prince's own kitchen. My

kind hosts treated me to every diversion which the country afforded. Sometimes we went out hunting, at others we witnessed sports of agility and strength; and on the days we passed at home, Omar used to collect all the poets and story tellers of the country, to pay me compliments more grateful than merited. According to the accounts of these veracious gentlemen, I might trace my descent at my pleasure either from the Genii or the Peris; and as to my achievements,—the thousands which Antar slew every morning before breakfast, without a hair on his head being hurt, were child's play in comparison. Omar's relations and friends behaved to me as if all these fictions were fact: his father seemed to rejoice in our growing attachment, and Ibn-Aly himself, the head of the family as well as of the tribe, paid me every most flattering attention. Strange to tell, but true; the place where in the course of my chequered life I experienced most of that glowing kindness which springs from the heart, was that where I sat down the greatest stranger, and which, in point of geographical situation, lay furthest removed from the land of my birth.

“I yet only reckoned the length of my stay at El-Gaddeh by single days, when one evening, returning with Omar from a camp pitched on the skirts of the desert, the youth suddenly stopped to contemplate the setting sun. After some time watching its decline with a pensive air; “ Selim,”

said he,—pointing to that part of the horizon where its broad disk was rapidly gliding behind the earthly globe,—"your heart, I fear, still lingers there. Do what we may, some day we shall see you take up your staff, and bend back your steps to the regions of the west."

"Omar," answered I, "*there* certainly arose the first affections of my youth; in those regions were knit the strongest ties that bind my soul. It seems as if there alone my autumn could enjoy its second spring."—And though this speech might seem only framed for the occasion, and intended to enhance the merit of my stay, it had begun to be the language of truth. When I thought of my no longer existing Euphrosyne; of my still—as I hoped—breathing Alexis, and of my ever faithful friend Spiridion, tears of tenderness started in my eye, and the longing to return to the soil which had been blessed by their shadow, made my heart swell in reality with ill suppressed emotion.

"Ah!" rejoined Omar, "why cannot we offer you, among us, ties strong as those that draw you away! I wished my Selim to marry one of my sisters, in order that our blood might be mixed; that you might strike root in our soil. O that my parents, who so dote upon the preserver of their son, would for once sacrifice the pride of their race to the promptings of their gratitude and the dictates of their love!"

"Sir," replied I, somewhat nettled, "supposing your parents wished for the alliance, know you that I can accept it? I told you before that I once was married: I told you that I had had for my wife the daughter of a Bey of Egypt: I have since sworn never to plight my vows again. Inform your parents of this engagement, in order that they may be troubled on my account neither with scruples nor with fears. To free them from all restraint and to rid them of all uneasiness, I shall soon return to Derayeh. Indeed I am to blame—in my situation—thus to stay away from the great schaich, to whom my employers sent me."

"Forgive the unintentional offence," resumed Omar, covering his eyes with his hand: "I could mean no reflection on your birth. The genuine Arab thinks the purity of his pedigree sullied even by mixture with the Tartar blood of the Sultans,—who probably would with equal care shun the taint of the Arab race. These are man's follies in every quarter of the globe!"

An effort now was made to turn the conversation to other topics;—but with little success. Constrained while it lasted, it soon languished, and finally died away. Omar, so far from appearing relieved by the indifference which I expressed to the prejudices of his friends, would rather have seen me anxious to overcome their objections. He regretted my lukewarm desire for a permanent

connexion with his house; and from the day of this excursion a despondency came over him, which, having its source in the mind, baffled every power of medicine.

Finding I could afford my friend little solace by my stay, and was wasting my time at El-Gaddeh, I seriously prepared to make good my words, and return to Derayeh. The hour was already fixed for my departure, when Ibn-Aly sent to speak with me.

"Selim," said he, as soon as we were alone, "you have now associated with us long enough to know our customs and our disposition. See whether you could like for ever to turn away from the west, and to sit down among our tribes, so you were made a sharer in all their prerogatives,—so you were given a wife from that house in which you already have gained so many friends. I must not conceal from you that my kinsmen have brought their minds to this proposal only after a considerable struggle. Rarely we marry out of our district, more rarely still out of our country: but such is the love we bear Omar, and such the fear which his languor inspires us with of losing him, that for his sake we not only permit, we ardently desire an union, which may fix you for ever in the land of the Wahhabees. Nor need you fear that objections, wholly unconnected with your person, when once removed, will leave roots from which to spring up

afresh. Once adopted as the son of my friends, you may to the end of your days rely upon their support and affection."

Had an alliance with the children of Wahhab never been proposed to me, I should probably have regarded it as a thing from which my mind must, in its present state, have utterly recoiled. I had originally sought the Wahhabees only in order to fly from Suleïman, and I had since only prolonged my stay with them, because I could nowhere else expect so hospitable a reception: but, though resigned to live a while in Arabia, it was not among Arabs that I wished to die. Unfortunately, after people so proud as these lords of the desert had overcome their own overweening scruples, it became expedient for me to conquer my more reasonable reluctance and to accept the connexion, or to quit the abode of those by whom it was tendered. I could not tarry where I had refused what was offered with so great an effort, and was considered as so signal an honour. I therefore resolved to sacrifice my feelings to my situation; but, still apprehensive of diminishing my importance by too ready an acceptance of an offer unwillingly made, I appeared yet a while to hang back, and again alleged my vow to Ibn-Aly, as I had done before to Omar. *That* circumstance however was not admitted to have any weight but what my own inclination gave it. No oath, taken during my state of darkness, could remain binding after my eyes were opened to the true light; and, on Ibn-

Aly assuring me very solemnly that the Wahhabee was only held to perform what the Wahhabee had promised, I yielded at last to so powerful an argument. The sanction of the grand schaich however was deemed necessary, before a marriage so greatly out of the common rule could be concluded: it was asked, and, after some little hesitation, obtained.

Among sisters all equally straight, of whose faces I had scarce had a glimpse during their brother's danger at Derayeh, and whose voices I had seldom heard since their return to El-Gaddeh, I harboured no preference, and therefore submitted implicitly to the choice of my friends: it fell upon the eldest, who still remained unmarried;—a maiden no longer reckoned quite in her prime, as she had attained the mature age of fifteen. The reason of her continuing so unusual a time a barren plant in so prolific a soil, was not however the want either of inclination to take a husband, or of charms to attract one. It arose from the untimely death of two young men, both of distinguished rank, to whom she had been successively betrothed. The one fell in battle, the other was cut off by a fever; and perhaps the idea of some fatality attached to her name had since kept off other suitors. I felt no superstition on that score, and was as well pleased with the fair one chosen for me as I would have been with any other female of the family. No sooner had the union obtained Abd-ool-Azeez's consent, than, for fear I suppose lest the new suitor

should again slip through the noose, the wedding day was fixed at a very early period.

All my remaining cash was employed in fitting out my future spouse with necklaces and bracelets, ear, nose, wrist, finger, ancle and toe rings,—which, though a Wahhabee, I found that, as a woman, my bride could endure. The presents which in my turn I received from her parents and friends, were of a more useful description: a fine horse completely equipped with mace, lance, and carbine; a commodious goat skin tent, with its apartment to the right and left; a Persian carpet; a handsome sofa case, and a variety of household articles. My friend Omar, anxious to see me in every respect on a par with the proudest of his house, supplied whatever others might omit. I except pipes and chaplets: Wahhabees neither smoke nor count their beads.

The very last items of the *menage* of which I was permitted to make an inventory, were, as usual, the charms of my bride. When, however, after running with every demonstration of terror and dismay from house to house—as is deemed an indispensable act of decorum on these occasions—she at last suffered herself to be caught by her more nimble companions, and was brought by force to her expectant bridegroom, I could not help thinking that others, more worth pursuing, had come more readily; and found nothing to drive from my mind the deep sunk image of my Euphrosyne. The

circumstance produced a relief to my feelings rather than a disappointment to my taste. Had Aïsché been so superlatively handsome as to fan into a fresh blaze the embers of my heart, I should have felt as if committing an infidelity to the memory of her whom I could now only honour by unavailing regrets. Not that the sister of Omar must positively be called plain. The sun indeed might have found little to spoil in her complexion, had it been allowed freely to shine upon her person: but with teeth as white as ivory and eyes and hair as black as jet, she had a countenance which, like Omar's, beamed with sweetness, and the Arabs all declared that her limbs resembled the branches of the date tree waving in the north-east wind, which only meant, that she moved very gracefully. Her features, besides, were regular, and the least touch of those cosmetics, so plentifully used by our artful Chiotes, would have enabled her in a civilised country to pass for a positive beauty, or at least for a very captivating brunette,—had she not most perversely destroyed her chance for ever, by having every prominent part of her face, neck and arms, indelibly sprigged over in marks of gunpowder, after the most approved pattern.

Her mind, like her person, resembled that of her brother. With every amiable quality, it retained all that diffidence of its own worth, which those are the oftenest unincumbered with, who ought to feel it the most. In its overflowings of love and of

confidence, I learnt what even Omar had carefully kept from my knowledge; namely that, while employed at Derayeh in curing the wound of the brother, I had unconsciously transfixed with Cupid's darts the tender heart of the sister. Her secret passion had, perhaps, contributed as much as the professed friendship of Omar, to determine the parents in favour of the union. The solicitude of these worthy people in behalf of their children remained not unrewarded:—the son and the daughter, each obtaining the long sought object of their wishes, each seemed to acquire new health and new spirits.

But if the bud, which had pined for want of the refreshing dews from heaven, now revived, it revived only to become the sport of storms and whirlwinds: for, where ardent love is sought and given, calm esteem soon is construed into absolute aversion,—and that crime tarried not to be laid to my charge. At first indeed Aïsché sought the cause only in herself. "Alas!" cried she, "how should a poor Bedoween girl be able to fix those affections, on which have been lavished all the fascinations of the women of the cities! Nature has not given me their charms, nor education their art. I have only my poor simple love with which to retain love; and they say that the more of its ardours are bestowed, the fewer are obtained in return:"—but by degrees my restless spouse began to render an imaginary

fickleness in her poor husband responsible for her disappointments. In a country where the heart resembles a volcano whose eruptions never cease, the fire in my bosom could not be supposed so entirely to slumber, and superior attractions abroad were regarded as the cause of my insufficient warmth at home.

No protestations I made could remove this idea: no behaviour natural or assumed could quiet these tenderly cherished fears. My actions, my gestures, my very looks—ever watched, ever weighed, and ever found wanting—were ever considered as confirming my treason. The most opposite conduct incurred the same sinister interpretations. Aïsché was always ready to believe without proof what she dreaded without reason. Her ingenuity had no employment but to establish my imaginary crimes, and to build upon them her real unhappiness. Did her unfounded jealousies complete the depression of my spirits, " she saw how matters stood: her person no longer possessed the smallest power to please; her love could not afford me the least solace; her very company was become to me a burthen!" Did, on the contrary, in spite of her unceasing anxiety, a momentary glimpse of cheerfulness unfurrow my brow, " she wondered at the sudden change; she tried to find out what success abroad could extend its influence to my very home!" The most insidious scrutiny was my constant welcome; and, after suc-

ceeding to perplex me completely by questions, the answers to which,—however differently framed—ever led to the same predetermined conclusions, Aïsché was always sure to found upon the very embarrassment caused by her unjust surmises, their undeniable confirmation,—until at last I no longer knew how to act or to look, ever had in her presence an air of constraint, concealed from her my most innocent actions as if disgraceful or culpable, and, thanks to her own unremitting labour, with a clear conscience always wore a face of guilt.

The brother, with whom I spent every hour of my absence from the sister, at last succeeded by his representations to remove in a certain degree my consort's suspicions of my unimpeachable fidelity. Who would not have thought every point of repose and comfort carried by this change? Not at all! Tender minds must have their grievances:—they are to them food and raiment. It was a worse symptom that nothing could attach me: it showed a total disgust of the country; it increased the danger of losing me altogether. From only fearing I might withdraw from her arms, Aïsché now began to tremble lest some day I should entirely abandon her home, her country, and her friends. The moment she saw me at all thoughtful, she was sure I meditated nothing less than to make my escape, and to return to the land of my fathers. It was useless to deny the charge: the stronger the protestations I made, the closer Aïsché seemed to cling to her

chimera. "Speak not; utter not a syllable; give me no assurance," she would cry in her agitation: "I know you Osmanlees abhor truth. If you pledge not your word, if you waste not your faith in empty vows, you may perhaps continue to love me, to stay with me, to press me to your bosom a little while longer; but if you make a promise, if you take an oath, I am undone at once. The promise, only made to be broken, the oath, only taken for the sake of the perjury, will goad you on the faster to my destruction; and you will have no rest till I am become a deserted, forsaken, widowed wretch!" And hereupon she would sometimes clasp her hands round my neck, imploring that before I abandoned her I would plunge my dagger to her heart, lest she should survive my loss. At other times she would throw herself on the ground, and with loud wailings tear her hair and beat her breast, as if my desertion had already come to pass.

Earlier in life I should only have felt the impatience produced by these unfounded apprehensions. I now also considered the principle whence they arose, and forgave the effect in view of the cause. By degrees gratitude for that cause even grew into sincere affection; and, could I for a moment have forgotten Euphrosyne, it might have ended in a return of still more ardent feelings; but love—such as woman delights in—was no longer to be felt by Anastasius for the living!

Stern war itself had lost in my eyes much of its

MAHARAJA SERFOJ

wonted charms;—and very fortunately, as matters stood. Somewhat more singed than usual by its ardour in returning their last addresses, the Wahhabees, though not sufficiently scorched to stay quietly at home, yet felt not disposed this season to seek its chances at an inconvenient distance. While some of the yet unsubdued kabiles of Montefih and Beni-Haled were making nearer approaches than they had done of late years to the domain of Abd-ool-Azeez, that portion of the schaich's own subjects whose chief residence was in towns and villages showed greater dilatoriness than usual in leading their flocks into the desert for pasture. It was even doubted a while whether Ibn-Sehood, Abd-ool-Azeez's eldest son—to whom his father had for some years past, on account of his own great age, intrusted the conduct of his warlike expeditions —would go into camp at all; and there seemed at one moment no chance whatever of my beholding the stopping of the least caravan, or the plundering of the smallest sanctuary, in honour of God;—when all at once the whole nation, men, women, and children, sallied forth from their stationary habitations, to pitch their tents in the wilderness.

Each tribe had its separate camp, at the distance of a league or two from its nearest neighbours. In each camp the tent of the chief occupied the central spot: round him the members of his own family formed the innermost circle: and round these again

his remoter vassals and subjects ranged themselves in circles still concentric but of wider circumference, whose relative distance marked their respective ranks and possessions.

Ibn-Sehood's encampment of course was the most considerable. To that, as to head-quarters, was sent from all the smaller and remoter camps constant intelligence of every interesting occurrence in their immediate vicinity. *There* also the schaichs of the minor divisions met, to hold council with the commander on the general plan of the campaign, and to receive his instructions respecting its conduct. Ibn-Sehood's camp was the capital for action, as Derayeh was that for repose.

The assemblage of tents among which stood my own, professedly bore a warlike form, and had a warlike destination; yet it must be owned that slight were the shades of difference between the Bedoween's most martial array, and their most peaceful establishment. Even in times of the profoundest peace the Arab of the desert lives in camps, constantly moving from place to place, and ready alike for attack and for defence; and during the periods of the most active warfare the combatants still only advance and retreat surrounded by their families, and as solicitous to feed their flocks as to fight their enemies. On ordinary occasions each subordinate schaich, at the head of his immediate subjects, halts, moves on, attacks or flies as his individual fancy or

judgment prompts him; dreams not of acting in concert with his brother schaichs, and evinces no sort of attention to the movements of the chief ruler. It is only when the commander of the whole nation purposes some definite expedition or coup-de-main of great importance and short duration, that all the lesser schaichs and their vassals close in round his standard. Nor do they then even consider themselves as engaged to assist him longer than suits their own convenience. As soon as they become tired of the service, or find the plunder short of their expectations,—without asking leave of the commander, or waiting the end of the campaign—they quietly secede, and return to their own peculiar district. The voice of fanaticism, the interests of religion may at times excite to the most daring and perilous enterprises; but they fail to enforce a patient and persevering discipline; and nothing do the Wahhab tribes so much resemble in their mode of warfare as those swarms of devouring locusts, offspring of the same country, who appear in hostile form when least expected; according as the wind sets one way or another fall on this field or on that; and, when all is devoured, again rise, fly elsewhere,—and nowhere leave the marks of a permanent possession.

Some of the Wahhab divisions more to the westward had, very soon after encamping, the happiness to be engaged in skirmishes with the children of

Beni-Haled. Our camp was left in a state of inactivity somewhat longer. Once or twice, indeed, we received intelligence from our scouts of hostile detachments hovering at a distance. Ibn-Aly immediately gave the signal for the alert, and sallied forth with all that were able to bear arms; but the first time we could not even, spite of all our diligence, get sight of the retreating enemy. In our second sally, indeed, we descried him, and in such superior force, that we had our tents taken down and our harems packed up in baskets, in order to be ready for retreat if necessary; but on this occasion as on the former, the foe fell back at our approach, and disappeared in the desert, without giving us any other trouble than that of again unpacking our families and unfolding our tents. My regrets were not outrageous. The age of my disinterested passion for blows was past; and I saw a chance of little else, where Arab met Arab.

Nothing thus materially accelerating or retarding the swiftness of our march, except the greater or less abundance of provender for our horses and pasture for our sheep, we advanced till within three or four conacks[1] of El-hassa. Unfortunately the facility of our progress had lulled us into a fatal security. Every evening the whole camp used at an early hour to yield to the sweets of repose, trusting almost entirely for safety to the vigilance of the watch dogs that guarded its approaches. One night

a most tremendous barking of our four-footed centinels spread on a sudden a general alarm. Those among us who were already sunk in sleep started up, and those who were still watchful ran to their weapons. Busy with some preparations for the next day's march, I had continued moving about, and already had incurred reproaches for my restlessness, when this appalling concert drove away for the moment all thoughts save of combat. I took a hasty farewell of Aïsché, ran to untie my horse's legs,[2] vaulted into my saddle, and rode in the direction whence the growing noise proceeded. The whole camp was already stirring: every one issued forth in the greatest confusion from his tent, to inquire of the other what had happened;—but this no one could tell. Presently a distant clash of lances gave to our apprehensions a more definite form and a greater intensity. A hostile detachment, observed several times on the preceding day, had contrived, under favour of the night, to approach us in such complete silence, as to leave every one of our biped videttes unaware of its proximity, until our more watchful four-footed outposts raised their warning howl. Not knowing the number of our assailants, darkness with its magnifying powers reported it to be so great, that retreat was judged the only means of escaping discomfiture. Even this however could not be effected except under cover of a partial re-

sistance, and, as soon as Ibn-Aly had collected a sufficient number of men, he went out in quest of the enemy. I joined him on his way, as likewise did my friend Omar. Never was disorder equal to that which our camp now presented. The group of watch dogs alarmed the first, had, by their howlings, gradually set barking all the remainder of our canine divisions unto the most remote; whence, with the certainty of being attacked on some point, we knew not in the least where to direct our defence, ran like blind people to the sound, and left the guidance of our motions entirely to chance. Sometimes thinking ourselves in contact with the enemy when farthest from the point of his attack, and at others fancying our assailants a mile off when in the midst of their troop, our offensive and our defensive operations were equally ill-timed: half the night we fought with empty space, and the other half pursued our own comrades. The watch dogs themselves, bewildered by the engagement, and no longer distinguishing in the fray between friends and foes, fell on both alike, and not only by their incessant yells so increased the horrors of the fight, but by their savage fury so augmented the bloodshed, that we were obliged to kill several of our old guardians, now unwittingly become our destroyers. As however every instant brought from the interior of the camp fresh supplies to the scene of action, we con-

trived to make a stout defence, without sensibly losing ground.

Mean time the portion of the tribe not engaged in its protection was no less busily employed in its removal. Some were taking down the tents, others putting up the utensils and baggage, others again loading the beasts of burthen; while here and there a party stole out, and, unseen by the hostile troop, drove the cattle into the part of the desert most out of reach of danger. Thus, in less than two hours, the whole camp was broken up, and on the move. The combatants on our side hereupon began to slacken their exertions, and to keep up a more retreating skirmish. This was the easier as the enemy himself, finding an unlooked for resistance, seemed more anxious to secure the booty made than to incur fresh blows in the pursuit of further prizes, and testified a great desire to slink quietly away, ere the dawn should discover his weakness, and bring succour from other camps to reinforce our strength. Thus, while we fell back in one direction, our assailants did the same in the other; and several times we were greatly tempted to wheel about, and to attempt the recovery of our captured equipages; but the fear of a surprise overcame this desire. Continuing our retrograde movement unslackened while darkness lasted, we compassed a distance of near six leagues from the place of combat, before the incipient dawn threw any

light upon our condition. The first rays of the sun showed the whole plain, as far as the eye could reach, covered with camels and other beasts of burthen, pacing singly or in small groups, loaded with tents, luggage, women and children, and intermixed with droves of oxen and flocks of sheep —every moment endeavouring to stop and graze, unconscious of danger. The horsemen, who thus far had kept together in tolerably close order, now fell asunder like a bundle of sticks untied, and eagerly set off, each for some different point of the compass; so that presently nothing was seen in every direction but warriors, crossing each other at full speed like shooting stars: each seeking, among the widely dispersed apparatus of the camp, his own family, furniture, and equipages.

For my part, I soon had the satisfaction of descrying my Aïsché in the midst of her retinue, or rather towering over it on a dromedary tall as a house, and, bating the uneasiness she had felt on my account, in perfect health as well as safety. On seeing me, after much anxious search, suddenly reappear alive and unhurt, her joy was indescribable: she gave a scream of delight; and at the same moment her whole suite welcomed me with shouts of pleasure.

It is dreadful at all times to lose what we love: but far more dreadful is the shock, when, after a period of intense alarm, the loss takes place just as

all danger seems to be gone by, and nothing apparently remains but to exult in a renewed term of safety and of bliss,—when the fresh blow of sorrow is struck just as the heart begins anew to dilate with all the fullest exuberance of frantic joy; and above all, when that blow arises, not from the evil dreaded, but precisely from its being overcome.

Such was my fate. Forgetting her exalted situation or unable to check her impatience, Aïsché tried, unassisted, to meet my embrace. In the hurry of the break up, her camel had been loosely girt. The sudden pressure made the pillion turn; she fell to the ground, received a hurt which her condition rendered mortal, and in a few hours expired in my arms.

Assuredly at no time had my love for the living Aïsché equalled my adoration of Euphrosyne, conceived since I lost her. But without being a headlong passion, my regard for my Bedoween wife was a sincere attachment. It rested on esteem and on gratitude, on endearing recollections and on fond and flattering hopes; and I had begun to feel the full value even of a love, for which I could only make a less ardent return. All was dashed to the ground in an instant, and long I dwelt on the first of my sorrows inflicted by Providence alone, and free from all mixture of self-reproach.

CHAPTER IX.

The first anguish of my feelings had scarcely begun to subside, when the schaichs of the different Wahhab tribes received a summons to lead out their followers, and to meet Ibn-Sehood near a particular well in the desert, whence they were to start on a distant expedition. The name of the enemy, or the point of attack, we were, according to the custom of the Wahhab commanders, only to learn on proceeding from the place of rendezvous. Ample room was left meanwhile for conjecture, and every instant fresh surmises were again abandoned for others of still later birth. Some expected a coup-de-main on Mekka, others an attempt upon Imam-Aly. From all quarters the schaichs of every rank hastened with their vassals to the spot appointed, some on dromedaries swifter than the wind, others on steeds not less fleet; one half armed with pistols and match-locks, the other accoutred only with sabres and lances, and none encumbered with more provision than two skins could hold—the one filled with flour, and the other with water. When collected, we might muster about fifteen thousand

men; though our enemies, deceived by the rapidity of our motions and the distant points on which we often appeared almost at the same instant, gave us credit for far superior numbers. No army could be better appointed both for offensive and defensive warfare, or could combine more active courage with more passive hardihood. Every where the wariest caution accompanied the most undaunted fanaticism, and whatever the supreme schaich of the nation might command for the advancement of the faith, his followers expressed themselves determined to achieve, or to die. In short, we seemed to hold in our hands the fate of the Turkish empire.

But here let me for a moment interrupt my narration: warned by aches which had relented for a while only to return with double fury, let me inquire for what purpose my memoirs were begun, and in what guise I must pursue them, to insure its attainment. The interruption will not be long, and the story proceed the more rapidly afterwards.

Unprincipled as my conduct must too often have appeared, I might perhaps propitiate my reader, at this advanced stage of my confession, by representing it as a sort of voluntary penance, intended to atone for my manifold offences. That I regret them is most true; that I wish I could wipe them away—were it with tears of blood—I conceal not:—

but far be from Anastasius even the show of believing, that where bitter tears and better deeds have not purified the sinner in the fulness of life, an idle disclosure of his errors, only extorted by fear on the brink of eternity, could still intercept his downfall, and closing in his face the yawning furnaces of hell, waft him triumphant to the portals of heaven:—and, as to the very different design of daring the opinion of the world, of defying its vengeance, and of making my misdeeds a subject of contemptuous boasting:—on the eve of escaping from all human pursuit in the protecting arms of death; fast approaching that cell where the shafts of man's resentment no longer can hurt my insensible remains, it would too soon for my credit be recognized as the vain vaunting only of secure cowardice.

Anastasius has not, in thrusting his foolish life upon the world, been actuated by motives either so distant as the first, or so daring as the others.

In a strange country, uncheered by a single voice not wholly new to my ears, and on a bed of sickness—only to be exchanged for the cold pillow of death, but retaining in a body worn out by suffering a mind still restless, still struggling with its fetters, how can I beguile the heavily creeping hours, how obtain a moment's forgetfulness of my prostration, how divert my thoughts from that future which no longer can be mine, but by directing all the remaining strength of my faculties to

the contemplation of that past of which I had my share. Thus only, though the sun of my days is set to rise no more, and though the voice of my friends can reach me no longer—though the gay are far off, and the good are gone by—may I still, in the twilight which precedes my last sleep, conjure up round my couch both the dead and the distant, and in my silence and solitude converse with the world.

This indeed must, throughout every page of these memoirs, have been recognised as the only aim of their writer: for every where my views have been directed to my external condition rather than to my internal emotions. Every where I have sought the amusement of describing scenes beheld, rather than the occupation of analysing sentiments experienced; every where I have exhibited myself rather as an unconcerned spectator in the world's motley drama, than as an actor very deeply concerned in the plot; every where I have tried to force myself to gaiety, even with a heart filled with anguish. Intent only on finding for each new passing day its fresh chapter, I have strung together characters as I met them, and incidents as they revolved before my too often aching eyes; and lest my employment should fail me ere I became reckless of my occupation, I have sought rather to spin out my materials in a good long prosing journal, than to compress them in a round and compact tale.

And in this way I would have gone on to the end of my narration, had not during its course a new object sprung up, a new interest arisen, a new wish invaded my unresisting mind.

But so it has happened: for that passion which, once admitted in the human breast, never again entirely quits its hold; that passion which, when the more volatile desires of youth and vigor yield to age and infirmity, only founds on their ruins its more exclusive empire; that passion which enables the decaying elder to survive his own existence by living on the past and the future, when the present eludes his feeble grasp; that passion which, daunted by nothing but obscurity and silence, represents the oblivion of the world as the direst of calamities, and prefers the fellest persecution to peaceful insignificance; that passion, by men called vanity, but the best gift of the gods, could not see me thus carefully collecting the materials of my life, without prompting me to combine them into a monument fitted to last after my death, and to inform after ages, that I too, like millions of others, had strutted my short hour on the stage of this globe: and, lest a circumstance so momentous to the world should be left unrecorded or should only be partially told, I now feel a wish to bring to its regular conclusion, what before I had hoped not to have time to finish: I now should regret being torn away from my narrative, before I had carried it down

to that decisive day, which saw me placed in a situation no longer liable to changes worth recording:—for, though I too well know that in my present situation I can only have for my readers those strangers of the west, who, from their distant corner of the globe watch the inhabitants of its more genial zones, as children do a worm, to wonder at its motions, and to thank God that they are formed of other mould, yet even a small niche in their remembrance seems so much preferable to entire oblivion, that, lest I might not otherwise have appeared to possess monstrosities sufficient to find favour in their eyes, I have perhaps even exaggerated my infirmities and kept back my better qualities, as of no value except to the owner.

Every succeeding hour, however, now begins to warn me in a more audible voice, that, unless my pen makes greater speed, my illness—gaining ground too fast upon it—must defeat this new object, and bring my life to a conclusion ere my tale is achieved. To be able still to attain the goal, I must henceforth loiter less on the road: I must make shorter halts in those insulated spots neither connected with what precedes nor with what follows; and, since my sojourn among the Wahhabees proved to be of that description, except in as far as, by breaking through my old habits and suggesting new thoughts, it enabled me to return to civilised regions with a mind

more matured and feelings greatly chastened, I shall despatch the account of its remainder as concisely as possible.

Suffice it therefore to say, with regard to the great schemes meditated by my hosts, that, whatever might be their purport, I beheld not their execution. Suleïman's crafty kehaya, informed of my stay among the Wahhabees, and afraid of my influence over their councils, hastened to effect the greatest injury his enmity could do me,—that of making me appear his friend. So ingeniously was a letter from the miscreant fraught with whatever might give me the appearance of betraying my employers, and so dexterously was it made to fall into their hands, that Abd-ool-Azeez could not refrain from summoning me before him, to vindicate my innocence or to suffer for my crime. My punishment was to consist in utter expulsion from the tribe whose countenance I had forfeited. Former hospitality forbade severer penalties.

Had my Aïsché—permitted to preserve her innocent existence—promised to cheer with tender cares the evening of my restless life, even simple banishment from her abode might have seemed an infliction sufficiently severe. Reconciled by habit to the manners of the Wahhabees, I could gladly have ended my days where, only seeking refuge from an enemy, I had most unexpectedly found

a friend, a family, and a home. One object had indeed by degrees so strongly entwined itself with all my future schemes, as to have become an indispensable condition of my felicity in whatever abode I might choose; and this was my darling child, my Alexis: but him I had purposed soon to send for; and then—forgetting and forgotten in the land of my birth—I might without repining resign my breath among strangers, and leave my worthless bones to whiten in the desert.

But far differently now stood the case. Aïsché was no more, my ties upon Wahhab's children cut asunder, and I again become the lone mortal whom a single Arab stopped on his first entering the desert. Since the loss of that which had endeared to me its sands, the secret wish again to press the hallowed soil which bore my Alexis had revived with such intensity, that all other schemes lost their relish in my eyes. To return to the only being in this world whom I could call my own, to bestow upon him that paternal care which he thus far had never known, to cherish him in my long estranged bosom, and to render him the sole and permanent solace of my remaining days, was henceforth the only happiness after which I thirsted; and, under the influence of this all-subduing feeling, I almost hailed Achmet's fraud as a fortunate event—as a circumstance which, by causing me to be banished from the desert for injuries intended the Wahhabees ere

I had experienced their kindness, might spare me the pain of appearing, in contempt of all gratitude, to leave them from choice, after their best gifts had again brightened my existence.

When therefore the charge of treachery was preferred against me; when the kehaya's letter was read, and when my expected defence kept every breath suspended, every eye intently fixed, and every neck on the stretch, I only answered the accusation with sullen and haughty silence: but, if that very strangeness of my behaviour made Abd-ool-Azeez doubt my guilt and Omar loudly assert my innocence, it left the one without power to absolve, and the other without an excuse for detaining me. They suffered the wayward stranger to depart from among them; and I disdainfully went on my way, taking with me only—a few endearing recollections excepted—the little I had brought. My course lying westward, I bent my steps at once towards the setting sun, and ———

[In this place the manuscript leaves us to regret the loss of a few pages, which have been either cancelled by the author himself, or torn out by strange hands after his death. The interruption however seems to be of little consequence; the text, where it recommences, shows Anastasius moving on a new but not very distant stage, and describing only a different Arab tribe from that among which,—as he himself says,—he found, and again lost, a friend, a wife, and a home.]

It is—he resumes—the most numerous and pow-

erful of the tribes which reside in the interior of the Hedjas. Its principal schaich can singly bring into the field an army of upwards of three thousand horse, well armed and well equipped: nearly twenty inferior schaichs acknowledge him as their supreme lord; and the great schaich of the tribe of Anahsé, who resides at Keïbar in the Nedjd, never fails, in any expedition worthy of their joint powers, to assist him with a numerous division of his choicest troops.

By means of this union of strength the Arabs of the Harb mock the Sultan unreproved, whenever he tries anew to revive his obsolete claims as their sovereign; and, for the permission to lead the pilgrims through its trackless sands on their journey to Mekkah, they exact from his representative the Pasha of Damascus a yearly fine, which this Visier fails not to charge in his turn to the account of the Porte.

Djezzar, who in the year 1794 still reigned at Damascus as well as at Acre, persuaded himself that a double escort would enable him to cross the Hedjas without paying this impost; and when the schaichs of the desert presented themselves on his passage to claim the customary toll, they only received an insulting refusal. Unprepared for compulsory measures, they were obliged for the moment to abide the indignity, but early the next season the schaichs of the Harb and of Anahsé quitted their abodes of Keïbar and of Khaff, in order to watch

from their camps the opportunity for joint and just revenge.

The annual march of the Hadj is so regular, the different stations where it halts are so exactly determined, the day and hour of its passing through every district on its route vary so little, that whatever Bedoween may have any suits to settle with any of its divisions, need only consult their own convenience as to the time and place. They may stop the caravan according to their pleasure either in its coming or its return, and, of the far stretching string of pilgrims, they may select for their respondents just whatever part they think most likely to afford them both easy and ample satisfaction.

On the present occasion the caravan was suffered in its outward march to reach Mekkah unmolested, in order that, on its return, a presumptuous security might render it an easier prey. The vicinage of Khedieh, a town two days journey distant from Medineh, was fixed upon as the spot most favourable for the meditated surprise; and, as the pilgrims always make a three days halt at Medineh, in order to pay their devotions at the Prophet's tomb, the day on which they were to arrive in that city was that of our departure from our different stations to meet near the walls of Khedieh.

The Emir's own division was the foremost to arrive at the place of rendezvous. It took post behind a small hill, whose summit afforded every

convenience for watching the approaching Hadj, and whose reverse was equally well adapted for concealing our own force. Emissaries were immediately despatched to reconnoitre, and to report at what distance the pilgrims might still be.

Mean time the Emir went about giving his last instructions to his troops. "Remember!" said he; "we only wish to obtain our dues from an unjust visier; not to injure a set of unoffending hadjees. Therefore, attack property—but spare lives. Direct your chief efforts where you see the most merchandise, and the fewest soldiers. Useless shedding of blood should be avoided. If we kill the Osmanlees, who will hereafter want our camels?"

This excellent advice seemed for once fated to be thrown away. The scouts sent out had not advanced far before they returned utterly dismayed, and already from a distance making signs of bad news. As soon as within hearing: "All is lost," they cried. "The miscreant Djezzar, pushing on from Medineh the very day of his arrival, is already gone by. Perhaps from some eminence the rear of his force may still appear in sight!"

At these provoking words the Emir immediately galloped off at full speed to a commanding height, about half a mile off, to ascertain whether he had indeed been twice deceived by the wily Bosniaque. Most of us followed. Arrived within a few yards

of the summit, we dismounted, and, crouching down, advanced among the bushes.

In an instant all conjecture was at an end. Along the furthermost outskirts of the boundless plain still remained clearly discernible the long dark line of pilgrims, winding their weary way through the white sands, like a black and slender millipede, whose anterior extremity already has entered some crevice, while the thousand legs of the body and tail follow apace. Ere however the other still wanting detachments had joined our force, it would have been foolhardiness to pursue the enemy, and after all were collected, it would be too late to overtake his flying troops. So adieu our brilliant hopes! A bird's eye view of the fleeting caravan was the reward of our mighty preparations.

At this sight a deep gloom overspread the Emir's countenance. He struck his spear with fury into the ground, convulsively grasped the long braids of his black hair, and, after musing awhile—his eyes all the time fiercely rolling in his head—"let us return," he cried, "to our homes; and after having sounded the trump of war through the desert, hush, if we can, the irksome echo!"

Down the hill he now again rushed, and after him all his followers, heaping every variety of malediction upon that vile Djezzar, who, against all rule and precedent, had hurried on where no Pasha had

ever hurried on before,—and that too, for no purpose but to give us the slip.

Just as we got to the bottom of the hill, came scrambling up to meet us the last of our scouts. We cared so little for a fresh confirmation of our disappointment, that, ere the man had time to unclose his lips, we desired him not to take the trouble of delivering his message, and this the more, as he seemed to carry a face of joy which we thought exceedingly ill timed, and for which the Emir gave him a sharp and proper rebuke. Long therefore did he struggle, and many fruitless attempts did he make, before he could convey to our understandings that he really brought good news;—and this was its purport.

The Pasha of Damascus, goaded by his evil conscience, had indeed escaped our vengeful clutches; but the Bey of Egypt still remained at Medineh, and was to escort back part of the way, in addition to his Cairo caravan, a great portion of that of Syria, which, wholly unprepared for Djezzar's diligence, had been left in the care of the trusty El-Ashkar. The number of pilgrims would thus remain nearly the same as before, and that of troops alone be diminished: but this reduction, though it might leave the Emir fewer laurels to gather, he could contemplate with becoming philosophy. Out therefore he poured his whole weight of anxiety in one single long protracted sigh of relief and of joy;

and scarce was it brought to a conclusion, when all the different divisions of our allies, still wanting, arrived in sight at once. We now spent the night in delightful expectations, and the next morning stationed ourselves in ambush behind a range of low hills, a few hundred yards from the track of the looked-for caravan.

According to immemorial custom, the Magarbees or men from the west—in other words the Barbaresques—in going form the rear, and in returning the van of the Cairo hadj. Loaded with arms, and light of baggage, they were deemed unworthy of the honour of our notice. So far from attempting to stop these honest gentlemen, apt to deal in no weighty article save blows, we on the contrary wished Heaven might speed them on their way. Even the lofty Osman himself, who came next with his kehayas, his body guard, and his remaining troops, we permitted to pass unmolested—though I longed to break one more lance with some of my old Cairo cronies: but when the great fat merchants, who kept aloof even from their own escort—full as much dreaded by them as any Arabs—in their turn were seen to approach, panting with heat, and in a cluster formed for the very purpose that we might seize it at one grasp, the eyes of our men glistened with joy, and my fingers began to itch like those of a physician at sight of his fee. In the interval between the passing on of the worthless

rabble which preceded, and the approach of these men of substance, we sprang forward, and, posting ourselves in the middle of the way, cut off the rear completely from the body of the caravan, and called to our friends to stop, and be rifled.

At the shouts of terror occasioned by this little compliment, it is said that the great Ashkar himself disdained not to turn round his head, in order to inquire the cause: of which being duly informed, he valiantly clapped his stirrups to his horse, and set off at full speed;—all his veterans gallantly followed the example of their chief.

Thus abandoned by their defenders, the pilgrims only sought to save their persons, and left their property to its fate. In less than five minutes the whole field of battle was strewed with camels, horses, and mules, laden with every sort of goods. We had nothing to do but to gather the manna showered around by Providence. Every man seized upon what was nearest to him, and when two or three happened to pull at the same parcel, they drew their sabres and divided the bundle.

Where predatory expeditions like the present were considered as praiseworthy, not only in the leaders of tribes but in their humblest followers; where each successful robbery only conferred fresh distinction on its authors; where every wayfaring man resigned himself beforehand to the chance of being despoiled, and the sufferer regretted his loss

without blaming his assailant, I carried not my scruples of honesty so far as alone to deny myself a share in the common privilege: but it was my folly on this occasion to be fastidious in its exercise. I would not strip a poor pedlar, or a hadjee in humble trim. All the ordinary pickings I haughtily passed by, and abandoned to the greedier Arabs. Indeed I did worse. To my eternal shame be it spoken, I assisted two or three wretches in making their escape, after helping them to lift up their bundles. At the same time I felt no very insurmountable objection to some single rich equipage falling in my way, rather than in that of a parcel of vagabonds, who would not know its value or feel obliged to its owner. Unfortunately I proceeded on so far in my desultory ramble—disdaining every unimportant prize which I met—that at last I met nothing more, got clean out of the track of the plunder, and fell in with no further booty either great or small.

I now began to repent me of my squeamishness. Small prizes after all were better than blanks; and it happened not unfrequently that a pilgrim's tattered garments concealed a perfectly whole purse. This reflection would have urged me to retrace my steps, but that I was sure of no longer finding even what I had left untouched. While my time had been spent in idle promenading, there was little doubt that the field must have been gleaned by my more industrious companions unto the last ear.

Precisely, however, when I thought all chance of doing any good entirely gone by, fortune was pleased to reward my forbearance. In an interstice between two small hillocks which suddenly opened upon my view, appeared at the head of a string of camels heavily laden, a well mounted merchant, only intent upon rejoining the hindmost troop of the Bey's soldiers, just diving into a hollow before him.

I cried to the diligent hadjee to stop, and to deliver up his property,—and thus addressed, he thought fit to look round; but seeing me quite alone, he only answered: "I was welcome to whatever I could take,"—and spurred on his horse the faster. He judged rightly enough that, unsupported as I was, I could scarce be deemed a match for six or eight sturdy and well armed fellows, who, while he spoke, sprung forth from behind his huge camels, and grinning from ear to ear at their master's ready wit, showed me on a line with their white teeth the black muzzles of their guns. This sight somewhat cooled the ardor of my pursuit: from a full gallop I fell into a canter, and from that into a trot, until at last I pulled up entirely, and, puzzled how to act, stood awhile stock still, not liking to advance, and not less averse to retiring empty-handed.

Fortunately at that moment came up from the eastward a troop of ten or twelve Arabs, belonging to a small and distant tribe, usually buried in the deepest sands of the desert. These gentlemen had

not originally participated in our plan of attacking the Hadj, but hearing of the scheme by accident, had advanced beyond their usual beat, on the mere chance of what they might pick up. Most readily they consented—on seeing my dilemma—to lend me their assistance; while the merchant's escort, perceiving this reinforcement, at once passed from a show of the utmost resolution to that of the most dastardly fear. In their confusion, these brave guardians of the property committed to their care fired from behind their four-footed battery one single volley,—just to exasperate their pursuers,—and then scampered off with all their might, leaving me in undisturbed possession of the goods and chattels which—as has been seen—their master had before most formally made over to me, in the presence of reputable witnesses.

Luckily I had to divide the richest prize of the caravan with the most ignorant Arabs of the desert. My associates in this excellent affair only valued goods according to their bulk and weight. The refuse articles, the outside envelopes—coarse cottons, clumsy shaloons, stuffs like packing cloth, and trinkets like horse trappings—were what they chiefly coveted. The shawls fine as cobwebs, the muslins thin as gossamer, the silks like summer clouds, they held in utter contempt. A bag of pearls from the Ormus bank, of the size of full-grown filberts, they tasted; but finding them hard

and insipid, they flung the good-for-nothing pulse away, and left it for me to cram into my girdle. In like manner, when,—searching about for the pearls which had dropped out—I picked up a little casket which lay by itself on the ground and seemed to have been lost only from a special anxiety to save it, my tasteful friends, who saw nothing in an assortment of rubies and diamonds—none in truth much larger than myrtleberries—but a parcel of glass beads fit only for children, let me keep them in exchange for a huge bale of calicoes. In consequence of these two lucky hits, I became so generous in the division of the remainder of the spoil, that, grave as the party seemed by nature, they could not help smiling at my folly; and I have no doubt that some facetiousness on the subject would have come out in due time, but for the fear which haunted the interlopers of being observed, and made to give the Emir an account of their capture. This rather serious consideration now rendered them anxious to be gone, and with good wishes to me and significant glances at each other, they sped away.

I myself was not sorry to find a secluded nook, safe from intrusion, in which to take the first inventory of my new riches. When I opened them out, and viewed in its full blaze the treasure I possessed, I fell upon my knees, and devoutly thanked Providence for having made the merchant

to whom I owed it a wag, and for inspiring him with a witticism, which, without being particularly good in itself, was nevertheless a most happy one for his despoiler, whom it enabled to keep the property acquired, with a safe conscience. This act of devout gratitude performed, I neatly inserted my baubles between the folds of my belt and the plaits of my turban, and, thus safe from the danger of exciting envy, went back to our party, trailing after me—with great apparent exertion—an enormous bundle of very ordinary goods, fully resigned to the raillery which I met with from the Arabs, for bringing home, among so much valuable plunder, so contemptible a capture.

My present opulence would alone have sufficed to renew my yearnings after more polished regions, had I felt none before. Undoubtedly poverty was easiest to be borne among the poor: but with a pocket full of pearls and diamonds, who could live upon dry locusts? especially when possessing in the west, as I did, a little treasure far more precious than diamonds or than pearls, which the gems I had gained would enable me to adorn like the little jewel of my heart. The longing to return to Smyrna, already powerfully felt among the Wahhabees, now increased in Nadder's camp to such a degree, that the soil of the desert seemed to burn under my feet. An impression began to haunt me that, unless I quitted it immediately, some insur-

mountable obstacle would inevitably keep me spell-bound in its sands for the remainder of my life.

My companions, however, were not people to entrust with these feelings. They dealt not much in sentimentality, but had a notion of keeping in the desert things earned in the desert. With a proper respect for this prejudice, I equipped myself as if only going to visit a neighbouring camp, and set out at a slow pace, in a careless and indolent manner: but, like a school-boy who designs to play truant, I quickened by degrees my step, got into an easy trot, from that into a canter, and finally,—as soon as I had turned the last corner from which I thought I could be watched,—clapped my stirrups to my horse, and darted through the plain.

I had scarce performed three leagues, when, a little way before me, appeared a personage whose accoutrement belonged not to the desert, and whose answer to my call in fact proved him to be a hadjee, separated from his companions by the discomfiture of the morning. I spurred on to join the stranger, as he did with all his might to avoid me. At last, finding his pursuer gain ground fast upon him, he looked back, and without stopping or taking the least aim, fired at me both his pistols. Neither of them fortunately bore within thirty yards of the mark: but I took the will for the deed, and ran at the uncourteous pilgrim with my spear couched. He

escaped the shock by his alacrity in ducking. Not choosing to waste my powder, or to alarm the desert, I hereupon drew my dagger. My hadjee now assumed a most piteous and supplicating posture. "Crush not," he cried, "the insect that crawls in the dust. It was fright alone that made me fire. I never show the least symptom of bravery except when terrified out of my senses!"—The defence made me laugh: "Take your life," said I, "but give up your money." "Alas!" replied the hadjee, "what money would you have me possess,—I, who am contracted for; and visit the holy places as proxy only for a rich man, who takes care not to pay me, until he receives at my own hands the vouchers for my performance of the pilgrimage?" The excuse was ingenious: but my friend proved to have a purse of gold notwithstanding, and I doubted a while whether I should not take the money which, by his own account he did not want, and the pistols which he knew not how to use: but the ample fortune which I had just acquired enabled me to disdain the paltry prize. So I wished the *insect* well through the deep sands—and resumed my former pace.

Unwilling to travel close on the heels of a caravan, which I had helped to lighten of its burthen, I determined to lean rather more to the left, and to steer towards Acre, in preference to Damascus. Long therefore was the journey, and many were the perils, and much was I beholden to the swift-

ness of my horse, even though I only travelled in the night-time. Sometimes I had a guide, but mostly the stars alone directed my course. Equally tired of listening to the one and looking at the other, I built innumerable castles in the air, and formed endless schemes for my future conduct: but, first and foremost—laugh not, reader,—was that of becoming inflexibly honest!

When arrived within half a day's journey of Acre, I considered in what shape I might best meet the gaze of cities. Constant alarms and fatigues had so altered my appearance, that it was impossible to know me. My eyes were sunk in their sockets, and my bones starting through the skin. By contriving on the road to run my lance through my foot, I had produced a wound, and this wound was become so envenomed an ulcer, that it made a halt an indispensable condition to the cure. At the same time, in the residence of Djezzar, whose displeasure I had once before incurred by cropping a friar's beard, and had now deserved afresh by curtailing a pilgrim's equipage, some disguise seemed advisable. The character of a Bedoween agreeing ill with my long features and unguttural accent, I determined upon the less difficult part of a Turkish santon.[1] Its sacred garb would enable me at once to avoid the inconveniences of poverty, and the suspicion of wealth. The transformation was speedily effected.

I pushed on again, and soon reached Acre,—just two years from the day on which I left Bagdad.

The first face I met in the city appeared short of its nose;—I had witnessed that deficiency elsewhere. The next was minus an eye;—that too is sometimes seen in other countries:—but the third had no ears, the fourth no lips; and there seemed to be walking about as many people possessed of one hand only as of two. At last, meeting a man whom I was not afraid to question on this local singularity, in as much as—by some singular piece of good luck apparently—he still retained the possession of his full set of limbs and features, I civilly accosted him, expressed my joy at seeing his eyes, ears, nose, mouth, &c, all complete; and finally begged to ask how it happened that this occurrence was so rare at Acre?

"You are a stranger, it seems," answered the man, "and have not yet been taught the mark of our master:—it is by these peculiarities our shepherd knows his flock. Every sinner here receives it;—but, remember, some saints are not exempted.

I thanked my informer for his friendly caution, and, little enamoured of Djezzar's ugly mark, gave, in the abode which I reluctantly sought, as little eclat to my sanctity as possible. Unambitious of extending my fame, I only made the few pious grimaces, and performed the few miraculous cures,

which I could not possibly avoid in support of my character. My healing powers, however—like those of most sainted personages—proved very little convertible to my own use. Amidst all the bedevilled whom I exorcised, and all the epileptics whom I *unfitted*, my own wound healed very slowly. In the mean time my host—a man of some intelligence—gave me a short history of Djezzar, which I shall insert here, not so much for the edification of the world, as only to get rid, during a few pages, of that eternal *I* which haunts all the rest of my narrative.

CHAPTER X.

Bosnia brought forth the monster, since surnamed el-Djezzar or the Butcher. Born a Christian, and bred a carpenter, young Dimitri first signalised himself by slaying his brother with his axe. This feat compelled him to fly from his country: but as gratitude is the characteristic of noble minds, and as one of the implements of Dimitri's trade had been the instrument of his fratricide, he remembered in after times the instrument which had opened his way to greatness, and to his other titles added that of Aboo-balta, or father of the axe. The place in which he first sought refuge was that sink of every vice and asylum of every miscreant, the capital. On the road he had subsisted by begging, on his arrival he sold himself as a slave. His flaxen hair and fair complexion suited the Cairo market. Aly-bey became his purchaser. Converted to Islamism, and called by the name of Achmet, our hero soon acquired great proficiency in magic;[1]—and under the guidance of Egypt's ambitious ruler, this art remained not in Achmet's hands an idle pursuit: it afforded him the means of conjuring away with more adroitness such as had either disobliged, or had obliged the Bey too

much. Many heavy debts of gratitude were thus cancelled, in a way which left the conferers no possibility of complaining. For these services Aly-bey first created Achmet a kiashef, and next, governor of the Bahaïré. It was in this province that one single year's exploits were sufficient to acquire for him the title of Djezzar: but his patron, conceiving some suspicions of his fidelity, ended not the less that year by destining for the Butcher himself that reward which, through his means, he had conferred on so many others. Informed of his danger, Achmet now a second time fled for his life. He found an hospitable reception at the court of Osman, Pasha of Damascus. This Visier was waging war at the time against the Arab Daher, by inheritance prince of the small territory of Saphad, and, by conquest, ruler of the larger district of Acre—dismembered from the pashalik of Seïde. He sent Djezzar against the successful enemy, at the head of a troop of his own country-men—of Bosniaques: but spite of their valour and achievements, the Butcher could not prevent Daher from at last rendering Seïde itself an appendage to Acre, as Acre had formerly been to Seïde.

A singular race, inserted between the sea on one side and Mount Lebanon on the other, owns allegiance to the government of Seïde. Its name is Deroozi, its capital Dair-el-Khammar or the city of the Moon, and its religion a remnant of the

theology of the ancient Magi. In their schools the initiated, as I am told, were taught that all things sensible and intellectual emanated from a single first Essence; that the souls of particular individuals—brute or human—were only so many different lesser portions detached from this primal Essence, through an act of its own volition; that, deprived, on their first separation, of their former consciousness, these lesser divisions of the great Whole were only awakened to different partial degrees of self-knowledge, through means of the different species of bodily envelopes which it pleased the supreme Essence, their parent, successively to weave around them; that the apparent removal and transmigration of these distinct souls only arose from the formation and decay of the various bodies by which they were in turns occupied; and that, as all things sensible and intellectual first emanated from a single primordial Essence, so all things were ultimately again, after a vast circle of vicissitudes and developements—each rising in perfection beyond every former one,—to be reabsorbed into that primary Essence, and made partakers of its omniscience, and power, and glory. It must however be owned, that, if the knowing ones among the other sects prevailing in Syria pretend to trace in the belief of the Deroozi the wrecks of this high and ancient doctrine, the vulgar herd of the Mahommedans and Christians of that province,

loth to burthen their intellects with such subtleties, cut the matter short by asserting the creed of the Deroozi to be the exact reverse of that of every other nation; and averring that whatever the righteous abominate, these pagans hold in reverence, and whatever the righteous regard as sacred, they treat as execrable;—and strange to tell, the Deroozi themselves, who might be expected to know best of any people the truth, and to possess, though no one else should, the secret of their own doctrine, live in utter and contented ignorance on the subject. Among this singular nation not only religious practices, but religious creed,—not only rites, worship, offerings, fasts, and prayers, but doctrine and faith—remain the exclusive privilege of a peculiar cast, named Akkhals or Sanctified; in whose society none can be admitted that have not previously given up all worldly concerns; and completely renounced the interests, the occupations, and the converse of the seculars. It is these who exclusively take upon themselves the faith, and hold themselves responsible for the salvation of the whole community; and, while they are so jealous of their knowledge that they suffer no secular even of their own nation to be initiated in their dogmas, they are so intolerant in their dogmas themselves, that they admit no individual of any other race to the salvation exclusively reserved for their own nation. In vain would a stranger wish to subscribe to their

doctrine, or desire to be received into their community. The gates of eternal bliss remain not the less shut against him for ever. He might during the whole of his life profess the religion of the Deroozi with unremitting zeal; still must he at his death, like the infidel he was born, be precluded from their higher heaven; and only go to whatever less enviable place of retribution is reserved for the remainder of his unenlightened race.

As to the seculars, called by the priests djahels or simples, they are all, from the prince down to the peasant, held alike exempt from the performance of religious practices, and from the profession of religious tenets. The Emir or sovereign of the nation is not more than the meanest of his subjects, admitted by the akkhals to the mysteries of their belief, or to the secrets of their worship; but, having no rites or doctrine of their own, the Deroozi laymen are the more ready to adopt in respect to externals, the worship of whatever more powerful nation it is their policy to court:—whence their town and villages are filled with mosques, which the inhabitants never enter—except when visited by a Turk.

Among the Deroozi as among the Arabs, every subject is a citizen, and every lay-citizen a soldier. Military exercises are reckoned by this warlike nation the highest of pleasures, and contempt of death the first of virtues. Each district of thei:

country obeys the commands, or rather enjoys the protection of an hereditary schaich, who with the utmost simplicity of manners usually combines the loftiest pride of birth, and, while he excludes no one from his table, deems very few worthy of his alliance. Among these families that of Schebab enjoys the privilege of supplying the general ruler of the nation, who, chosen by his brother chiefs, takes the title of Emir, and resides at Dair-el-Khammar. His authority is limited, and on every affair of consequence he consults the other chiefs.

To the north of the land of the Deroozi lies the country of the Mawarnee or Maronites, called Kesrowan, and divided, like the former, into lesser districts governed by hereditary schaichs. This province pays allegiance to the Emir of the Deroozi, who holds it of the Pasha of Trabloos, as he does his own district of the Pasha of Seïde. The character and mode of living of the Maronites only differ from those of the Deroozi in a very few particulars, such as must naturally arise from the Christian religion they profess, and the communication they have with the sea, through the port of Bayroot. The inhabitants of the Kesrowan display greater industry, and possess more skill in business than their neighbours the Deroozi; and thence the Deroozi schaichs generally choose Maronites as stewards to their estates, and preceptors to their children: the difference of creed forming a less

weighty objection, where the tutor is only called upon to abstain from inculcating in his pupil any religious belief whatsoever.

Emir Melhem, one of the Deroozi rulers of whom his subjects spoke with the most veneration, was among the few men who wish to leave an interval between the pride of sovereignty and the nothingness of the grave. He abdicated his worldly power, left the society of the djahels, and among the akkhals commenced preparing his soul for its higher flight, about four years previous to its release from its earthly shackles. His brother Mansoor was, by the schaichs of Dair-el-Khammar, named regent of the Deroozi until his son Youssoof should come of age; but Youssoof saw himself, through the interest of Sad-el-Koori his guardian—a Maronite of the noble family of the Awâkri,—immediately recognized as ruler of the Kesrowan. Of this honour the young prince appeared fully worthy.—In the course of a single campaign he conquerred and re-annexed to his province the district of Djebaïl, long dismembered from it by a horde of scheyee Moslemen, called Mootaweelis, living on the reverse of Mount Lebanon in the fertile plain of Baalbeït.

Military renown thus adding its support to his hereditary rights, Youssoof claimed early the sovereignty of the Deroozi, with such means of enforcing his pretensions as Mansoor, his uncle, thought it

prudent not to disregard. Clothing necessity in the garb of virtue, this chief professed only to have held the supreme authority in trust for his nephew, and in 1770 solemnly placed on Youssoof's finger the seal of the reigning sovereign.

This event took place while Daher, prince of Acre, was pursuing his conquests in Syria. Not satisfied with taking Seïde, he at last laid siege to Bayroot, the seaport of the Kesrowan, to which Djezzar had retreated before him. The Butcher succeeded in driving back the Arab: but instead of restoring Bayroot to Youssoof its rightful prince, for whom he had undertaken to defend the place, he now declared he only held it in trust for the Sultan; and with Youssoof's treasures, deposited in it for safety, bought the investiture for himself. When, soon after, Hassan Capitan-pasha drove Daher out of Acre and Seïde, he was prevailed upon to confer the whole of these pashaliks on Djezzar, in recompense for his loyalty.

Following the example of his Arab predecessor, Djezzar made Acre his residence in preference to Seïde. The place was capable of an easier defence, both on the sea and the land side. Nor did he only give it strength: he also added beauty. The splendid relics of Tyre and Cæsarea were employed to adorn its new erections; and soon arose within Acre's turreted walls, a palace, a mosque, and a bath, whose architecture, achieved as if by magic, seemed worthy of the Devas.

But joy was banished from these gorgeous edifices. Djezzar's rapacity suffered it to enter neither the hovels of the little nor the conacks of the great. By converting every source of wealth into an article of monopoly, he kept his subjects poor, while he measured out his taxes as if he suffered them to grow rich; and, when his cupidity by its excess defeated its own purpose, it was in acts of refined cruelty that he sought his consolation. Every rising sun saw the torture applied; every day that passed was marked by fresh executions. The tyrant's glittering galleries re-echoed only with moans, his polished pavements were moistened with tears, and his marble terraces seemed adorned with crystal rills, only in order that their pure waters might wash away the streams of blood, with which they were daily crimsoned. The wailings of the tortured mixed themselves with the murmur of the fountains; and from behind the porphyry and jasper pannels of Djezzar's wide extending porticoes, were heard the groans of wretches, expiring immured within their unrelenting walls.

According to the immemorial custom of all eastern despots, their treasure and their wives are kept in the same enclosure, under the same ponderous bolts. The sacredness of the gynecæum is rendered subservient to the security of the hazné. In Djezzar's extended palace and citadel, however, a greater excess of distrust had chosen a still more mysterious spot for Plutus's sanctuary: the most internal re-

cesses of the Butcher's harem only formed the outermost entrance of the receptacle, where lay concealed his gold. Strength without and secrecy within guarded this holy of holies. High ramparts, deep fosses, and bulwarks bristling with cannon surrounded the sacred cells, and dark subterraneous passages only led to them by the most intricate windings. Of these Djezzar alone possessed both the design and the key:—never had their hapless artificers been permitted to return to the daylight which they quitted to build them; and their knowledge and their bodies still reposed within their fatal works. While none of the officers of the palace dared to follow Djezzar into his harem, none of the tenants of the harem itself were suffered to cast after him the slightest look of inquiry, when, like a threatening meteor, he rushed by his women, darted through their numerous chambers, and vanished at last in the mysterious labyrinth that led to his treasure.

Djezzar was a barbarous husband as well as a merciless master. His mamlukes, therefore, succeeded in opening a correspondence with his wives, for the purpose of procuring his death and dividing his spoil. No one knows what foe to humanity betrayed the well concerted plot: all saw too soon that Djezzar knew his danger. Infuriate he rushed into his harem, and for a while stabbed indiscriminately all he met in his way. But soon he regretted

the too easy death vouchsafed to the first victims of his rage, and caused the remainder to envy, by the tortures he made them endure, the milder fate of their predecessors. His own hands—it is said—submitted to the rack those charms in which he had rioted by preference, and the greatness of the raptures he had tasted became the measure of the pangs he inflicted.[2]

Even the seclusion and the thick walls of the women's chambers could not stifle the cries of so many suffering wretches. The mamlukes heard, and guessed their own impending fate. Immediately they rose, stormed the batteries which surrounded the sanctuary, and mastering their crested summits, pointed its own cannon against the fortress, and against the relentless tyrant, wading in blood within its precincts.

Unable to make his escape without falling into the hands of his enemies, Djezzar now plunged into the deepest recesses of his treasury. There he shut himself in with his hoards; and there, alone, and without the smallest chance of any other mortal following to assist or to defend him,—to bring him intelligence or to take his orders,—he remained stretched on his heaps of gold, in expectation of every instant being discovered, and dragged out at once to light and to death.

An hour was thus spent—by the mamlukes in incessant firing, and by Djezzar in indescribable

anguish. That period elapsed, the fire of the assailants began to slacken, and to leave longer pauses; until by degrees the report of musketry entirely ceased, and even the roar of cannon only was heard at distant periods. At last all din of arms subsided in a dead and awful silence. Djezzar no longer doubted that the harem was forced, and the mamlukes only employed in seeking the hidden entrance of his last retreat. Every instant their approaching footsteps seemed to vibrate nearer on his ear;—and thus he spent another hour in still greater agony than the first.

The continued tranquillity, however, now began to cast upon his mind a gleam of hope. With watchful ear and cautious tread he crept forth;—but first only a few paces beyond the inmost vault: by degrees a little further into the winding galleries; —and at last unto the very verge of the forbidden precincts. There, having again listened awhile at the grated door, without being able to perceive any sound, he ventured to open the ponderous jaws of the iron gate, and finally, with breath suspended and faltering steps, he again issued forth into the realms of light.

Here, the various chambers of the harem were the first he re-entered: but in them he only beheld —still exposed to all the garish glare of day—the mangled carcasses he had left. All was silent; and, but for the pale corpses lying about, all was soli-

tary. No living being—neither foe nor domestic—presented itself on the Butcher's way in these his well-stocked shambles, until, bursting forth from their inclosure, he all at once beheld, marshalled in two long rows at its entrance and hailing him with loud acclamations, his faithful Bosniaques. This chosen band was the tyrant's bulwark against the just wrath of his remaining subjects. Having fallen on the mamlukes and forced them to retire, its chiefs were waiting for their master's appearance, to acquaint him with his safety, and the flight of the rebels:—the greatest part of these ill-fated men were afterwards slain in a pitched battle near Seïde.

Meanwhile Osman, Pasha of Damascus, had died, and Mehemed, Osman's eldest son and successor, had been poisoned by Derwish his younger brother. Djezzar—possessed of more troops and more money than Derwish—now bullied the Sultan, and bribed the ministers into giving him the investiture of that important government. Still, however, only considering Damascus as a precarious possession, and Acre as a sort of patrimony, the Butcher continued to make the place of his creation that of his habitual residence. His accession of power only enabled him to pursue more steadily a plan—long commenced upon—of weakening the Deroozi into gradual and complete subjection. The allegiance which the Emir owed him as Pasha of Seïde, he made a pretence for interfering in all

the affairs of the country; and whatever schaichs of Youssoof's family formed a cabal against their chief, were always sure of support from Djezzar. Long however did Youssoof, in spite of this insidious conduct, forbear from open hostilities against the lord to whom he owed allegiance; but at last he found the only means to avoid ruin was to embrace rebellion. He rose up in arms against Djezzar, gave him battle, was defeated, and with the remnant of his army fled into the fastnesses of the Kesrowan, which had always preserved unimpaired their loyalty to Melhem's son.

Djezzar offered the prince a free pardon, on condition of suing for it at Acre. Youssoof left his two sons Sad-el-din and Selim under the care of his trusty Maronites, and with his old preceptor Sad-el-koori, who still continued his adviser, went to the Butcher's court. He was admitted, was caressed at first, was soon found fault with, was lured into a fresh semblance of mutiny, and with his faithful tutor was condemned to death. In vain the whole Kesrowan interceded for a beloved prince and for a respected countryman. Djezzar never forgave; and the prince and the tutor were led out to meet their doom.

It is reported that on their way to the place of execution, Youssoof, seeing all his fair prospects end in a gibbet, could not refrain from reproaching his aged counseller with having made him the

victim of his own ambitious views. "But for you," he exclaimed, "I might have died of old age!" "Your father," answered the firmer Sad-el-koori, "charged me to make you live a sovereign. I may have erred in the means, but I too pay the penalty. I asked nothing from you when in power; I followed you when ruined; I accompany you in death. What more could I do?"

The prince burst into tears; embraced, and begged his tutor's pardon. They were hung side by side from the part of Acre's wall which faces Mount Lebanon;—and Youssoof's last dying look fell on the blue mountains of his distant dominion.

During his persecution of Youssoof, Djezzar had annexed to the pashalik of Acre the district of Saphad by the assassination of Daher's sons, the valley of Baalbeït by the destruction of the Mootawelis, and the territories of Tabarieh, and Cæsarea by the expulsion of the Arabs of Sakr. One place alone, in the very heart of Djezzar's new acquisitions,—the poor and small district of Nabloos,—derided all his efforts. Aboo-Djerrar its schaich—nestled aloft in his inexpugnable castle of Sannoor,—preserved his independence amid his subdued neighbours; and it is said that his sturdy resistance gave Djezzar more pain than all his other successes could afford him pleasure.

Djezzar had however now attained that degree of power and independence, which induced the

Porte to send him alternately avowed favours and concealed daggers. The former were all duly acknowledged, and, by some unlucky chance, the latter never reached their destination. Their bearers disappeared, and, as usual, were no more inquired after. At last a new device was struck out. According to one of those ancient customs held more sacred in Turkey than positive laws, the Pasha of Trabloos, who on the pilgrims' return from Mekkah brings them at a fixed place a supply of fresh provisions, only enjoys the honours of the two horse-tails, in order that his lesser rank may not clash with the pre-eminence of the Emir-Hadj. The year 1794 beheld the first exception to this rule. Geretly Husseïn, ex-Capitan Pasha and governor of Trabloos, went to meet the caravan, preceded by three tails. The circumstance looked suspicious. Djezzar saw in Geretly a personage qualified to step into his place. He determined to be beforehand with his entertainer, and sent him a jar, properly sealed, of the holy water from the well Zemzem. Geretly drank—and died.

It was for the fifth time that Djezzar, in his quality of Pasha of Damascus, conducted the holy caravan to Mekkah, when, as related, he chose to defraud of their dues the children of Anahsé. I have already shown how they resented the injury, and how the offending leader escaped the avenging blow, and let it fall upon the innocent hadjees. Djezzar arrived

safe and sound at Damascus about the time I reached Acre; but he made so short a stay in the place, that, ere any one yet thought him near, he entered his own sea-girt capital.

A bomb, bursting in the middle of its assembled population, could not have spread at Acre a greater dismay than did Djezzar's unexpected arrival. Immediately every eye became fixed, every tongue tied, and every limb motionless and paralised, as if by the force of a fascination. No one durst speak, or look, or even listen: for the fate of all Djezzar's enemies, taken one after the other from among the living, made the vulgar believe in the supernatural powers he affected; while the wise dreaded what supplied the place of magic,—spies who informed him of every thing, and agents who stopped at nothing.

For my own part, I no sooner heard in the evening that the Butcher had come in at one gate, than I prepared, a cripple as I still was, to take my departure the next morning at the other. But even this proved too great a delay. Just as I was slipping my last parcel of diamonds into my belt, in stepped a messenger of the Pasha, to summon me before his master. I ran for my santon's cloak. "Spare yourself that trouble," said the fellow; "we know you well enough: wary eyes watched your proceedings when at Khedieh you murdered the wealthy Djiaffer, and plundered his rich equipage!"

The most heinous part of this accusation certainly laboured under the defect of falsehood. Still it came too near the truth to leave me any hopes of escaping through the chasm between the fact and fiction; especially with Djezzar for my arbitrator. The point therefore was, not to constitute him as judge of the matter. With this view: "Your name, pray?" said I to the messenger.—"What can it signify?" cried he in answer. "I ask it as a favour;" replied I.—"Well then: Mustapha Sakal;" surlily rejoined the messenger.

"Mustapha Sakal!" I now exclaimed;" "you are the very man I have been seeking. Know that, before I approached the poor dear dying Djiaffer,—who never was killed in his life—in order to afford him in his misfortune what assistance I could render, he said to me in an unintelligible voice: 'Generous stranger, you look so honest that I must trust you with my last request. Seek among the servants of the Emir Hadj for a youth of rare merit, named Mustapha, for whom I always entertained, unknown to himself, a particular regard; and give him in my name this valuable jewel.' I cannot doubt, O Mustapha Sakal! but you are the person. So take the gem. But as the Emir Hadj is unreasonable enough to constitute himself universal legatee to all who die under his special protection, assist me to make my escape, lest in my dreams I should blab out your good luck."

The tchawoosh entered into the spirit of my tale, even beyond my intention. "It can only be," said he—taking the jewel without any ceremony—"from the total failure of his memory that the worthy Djiaffer asserted my ignorance of his regard for my person, since, besides the bauble you gave me, he promised me at his demise a hundred sequins, which no doubt you will pay me with equal readiness." "Truly;" answered I—fearful there might be no end to the codicils—"he never mentioned the sequins; nor have I them to give."

The tchawoosh hereupon grew insolent. "Look in your belt," he cried, "and you will find them;" at the same time laying his broad fist upon me, and beginning to use violence. The question now seemed whether it might not be expedient to do by Mustapha, what I had *not* done by Djiaffer; and while debating the thing in my mind, I at all events grasped the dagger concealed under my saint's cloak,—when all at once a loud noise was heard at the door. It boded Mustapha as little good as myself. Fearing that a second messenger might come to supersede him in his office, he turned as pale as ashes, and with a haggard look and wild gesture: "Off," he cried; "off to the mountains this instant!" I waited not a second bidding. Rushing by some person in the passage whom I stopped not to look at, I was out of Acre in a trice, and in less than an hour out of sight of its loftiest

towers;—having left my horse behind me as my hostage.

All the remainder of the day was spent in making the most of my way. Toward dusk I lay down among some bushes, slept a few hours, and, while the stars yet twinkled in the firmament, rose again, and performed several leagues, ere the sun opened to my right the purple gates of the morning. I made such speed that its setting saw me clear of Djezzar's dread dominions;—for, in recompense of his last frolic, the Porte had just taken from him the pashalik of Damascus, toward which I was travelling.

The next day, two leagues only from its capital, while pacing pretty smartly and quite wrapt up in thought, I felt myself suddenly slapped on the back by an arm of lead. Djezzar and his myrmidons still haunted my imagination; and without looking round, I set off at full speed, till a cry of "comrade, whither scampering so fast?" made me stop and face the enemy. He was not the most terrific in the world; and only appeared in the shape of a derwish with his sugarloaf cap, who laughed at my panic most outrageously.

I laughed in my turn, and in this merry mood we approached. "As one of the godly like myself," cried the derwish, "I was going to offer you hospitality in our convent at Damascus." I readily ac-

cepted an invitation which would prevent my being seen in public, and we proceeded on together.

Entering a small village on the road, my companion made a sudden stop. "Hark ye, comrade," said he; "a bright thought this minute strikes me. We are so near our journey's end, that, without a little management, we must stumble upon home before we are aware of it. Let us therefore make the most of what little time remains ours; particularly as the sun is hot, and we have not, like the prophet, a canopy of angels to shelter us from its rays."

Upon this he lugged me, without waiting my answer, into the house of a Syriac Christian, where it seems he was well known. After saluting the party within, he boldly called for an okka of the best wine. I must have looked surprised, for he added, "It is to rub my limbs with, and bad stuff gives the cramp." The wine was brought, and set before us in a little back room, safe from unwelcome intrusion.

As soon as seated; "I have little faith," observed our derwish, "in external applications: therefore, O my soul!" added he in an emphatic tone, "bend all your thoughts upon heaven, lest you share in the defilement which, much against my will, I am going to inflict upon my body." And hereupon, carefully stroking up his whiskers, in order that

they too should avoid partaking in the sin of his lips, he applied the vessel to his mouth, and most devoutly began his internal ablution. For some minutes he continued in this employment, with uplifted eyes and an appearance of entire abstraction; till at last I began to think that he and the jug would part no more. This however finally happened, but with a long protracted sigh; after which he handed the half empty vessel to me. The santon therefore easily finished what the derwish had begun; and setting down the jar, I took up my staff to march out.

This movement was till premature. Making the most of time had, with my derwish, a more extensive signification than I apprehended. "Not so fast, brother," said he: "this place affords other gifts of Providence beside the juice of the grape, which man should not in his presumption contemn;" and forthwith he went and whispered significantly to our host, who upon the hint stepped out.

Faithful to his rule of making the most of time, our derwish meanwhile fell mumbling his evening orisons, in order that matters of business might all be despatched ere our landlord returned; but this diligence proved fruitless. The personage came back empty-handed, throwing the fault on the vast demands of the last caravan of pilgrims. The holy satyr therefore had no further motive for delay, and we proceeded on our way.

I could not help expressing some wonder, as we went along, at his very open indulgence in profane pleasures, marked as he was by his religious habit: but the observation seemed only to excite his raillery. "How you mistake my drift!" answered he, with a pious sigh. "If I mix with sinners, it is but to mend them; and how could this be done, if I were to scare them by a premature severity of manners?"

My companion's whole system of ethics seemed of a piece with this small specimen. "It is your half sinners only," he cried soon after, "who risk most to find the gates of Paradise shut against them. Carry the thing to its proper length, and the danger subsides:—you then are sure of salvation."

This doctrine sounding new in my ears, I begged an explanation. "Why!" exclaimed he, "is it not the acting against one's conscience that alone constitutes what is wrong, and leads to damnation?"—I agreed.

"Then," replied he, "if you only sin on, until habit has silenced that troublesome monitor, and prevents your thinking any more about its qualms, is it not as clear as daylight that you revert to a state of perfect innocence?"

All I had to do was to regret that so incontrovertible a truth should be so little understood: only I took care—as my companion might possibly have attained the degree of perfection he described—

to keep him in my eye during the remainder of the journey: nor was I sorry to arrive at the convent, where he introduced me in form to his brethren.

Whatever met my eyes in the monastery seemed at first sight to breathe the very essence of holiness. None of the derwishes walked otherwise than with downcast eyes. Their domestics kept time in their work with pious ejaculations; and the very cats of the convent looked as if, like Mohammed's tabby, they were constantly meditating on the perfections of the koran. A word whispered by my travelling companion in the ears of the superior speedily produced an entire change of scene, and procured me ocular demonstration of what small boundaries divide saint and sinner. The minor gaieties of the evening ended in a grand burlesque on the pious ecstasies with which the order edified the public.

The sort of gravity which I could not help preserving among scenes of grossness no longer to my taste, was noticed, and appeared to give umbrage. One of the derwishes taking me aside: "What ails you, brother?" said he: "I thought we had been sticks of the same bundle; but I know not what to make of you. As we let ourselves out, you draw in. Have we mistaken our man?"

I felt the danger of encouraging this idea. "By no means;" answered I, rousing myself to look sprightly. "My foot just now pains me a little. But

for that circumstance you would be astonished at my mirth:" and immediately I poured out a volley of bad jokes to prove my assertion. Still did I most joyfully hail the dawn, which saw me safe out of the tekkieh,[3] and again on the road. As I paced along, I smiled to think I should have lived to feel myself in danger, from being too demure.

CHAPTER XI.

A LITTLE kaflé[1] of Moslemen happened to be, like myself, bound for Hems. I joined it, and in my quality of santon acted as imam[2] to the party. It was I who settled the whole business of the common worship, took the lead in the prayers of my companions, and chid those who appeared inattentive in their devotions.

The city of Hems tempted me to take a few days rest. Caravans from the most distant parts of the empire, by making that place their thoroughfare, give it an appearance of uncommon bustle. In the bazar my santon's habit and practices collected round me such a crowd, that the mootsellim thought fit to inquire into my vocation. Little disposed to answer his questions, I pushed him aside, and darting forward—as if I saw something strange which no one else beheld—prostrated myself two or three times, and began to hold discourse with vacant space. It was evident to all present that I had visions; and the mootsellim began to be looked upon by the mob with an eye of wrath, for wishing to interrupt my converse with the world of spirits. He therefore prudently ceased to interpose his word,

lest his voice should be silenced altogether, and slunk away, muttering a few curses on all the saints and santons that infested his district.

With the mootsellim had come the moollah of the place. This latter looked significantly during the interrogatory, but abstained from speaking. I felt obliged to him for his discretion; and as soon as I was rid of the importunities of the governor, went and sat by the divine. "The fearful," said I to him, in a gracious manner, "build aloof on the inaccessible rock, but the secure mix with their brethren in the valley." My meaning was understood, and the moollah, to show that he felt his place to be among the secure, began to let himself out.—"How I envy you!" he exclaimed with a deep sigh.

I pointed to his costly fur, and to my ragged cloak. "No matter!" rejoined he,—"sackcloth is a bait for consideration full as much as silks: but by being offered to the mob only, has procured you more readily what you sought."

This speech made me wish to raise my character in the moollah's estimation. I gave him a few traits of my history, and he grew disposed in my favour. His mind was stored with much information, and hence it thirsted for more; while few of those he lived with had a single idea to add to his stock. The tenets and the views of the Wahhabees interested him particularly. I employed the greatest portion of my stay at Hems in giving him a descrip-

tion of these sectaries. In return he favoured me with a sketch of his own life.

"My father's humble roof," he said, "accidentally afforded shelter from a storm to a magistrate of high degree. On going away, the caziasker,[3] in order to save a present, gave his host a counsel. It was to send me to school, and to rely on his patronage. Till then my worthy parent had never boasted but of manufacturing good pipeheads; he now fancied himself destined to fabricate a head of the law. His fortune was spent in placing me in a medressé,[4] and my health ruined to do credit to the situation. My examination took place the same day with that of a dunce, descended from so long a line of distinguished dunces, that he received his degrees with unbounded applause for having answered right a single question, while I was near losing mine for answering a single interrogation wrong. I was however qualified for promotion: but, to render it the more acceptable, my generous patron kept it back as long as possible; or rather did nothing for me till his son wanted a tutor. He then proposed the place to my necessities, and soon they saw me the reluctant khodgea[5] to the young bey-moollah;—for the child had been aggregated to the college of muderrees[6] before he knew his letters. It certainly was unnecessary for him to learn them after. Yet somehow my stupidity was several years in finding out the exceeding bad

compliment I paid the father, by requiring diligence of the son. The mistake became evident, when, in recompense for devoting to the service of an incorrigible blockhead the best years of my life, I was made cadee of a miserable country town. Since that first step my promotion has proceeded at the slowest rate our rules would admit of; and, too old now for new advancement here below, I only look for further promotion, where I wish my cazi-asker no worse punishment than himself becoming a preceptor,—were it an angel's family."

"Long may the sun still revolve," said I to the moollah, as he finished his story, "ere you witness the accomplishment of your wish! Long may your wisdom still shine on the thousands of Hems!"

With these I tarried two days only, and then pursued my way northward, through a smiling well watered plain—thinking as I went along how dissatisfied the wealthy and the great always were with their lot. "Not so," added I mentally, "the poor and the lowly;"—and to confirm myself in my assumption, I stopped to congratulate a passing peasant on the beauty and richness of his country.

"Reserve your congratulations, answered the clown surlily, "for the Mahwali Arabs: we sow, but they reap. El-Korfan, their Emir, lays upon us what contributions he pleases. The monopoly of camels for all the caravans that cross Syria has

made him so rich and powerful, that he fears neither governor of Haleb, nor Pasha of Damascus: and why should he; who can at his pleasure bring into the field his ten thousand well appointed horse!"—Having growled out this speech, my informer went on.

I had scarcely travelled two leagues farther, when my good fortune made me stumble upon this formidable schaich himself, just at that moment encamped in the middle of the road. He too was out of humour as well as the peasant. Numbers of his camels had perished in the desert. But his frowns made not the pilau in his tent look the less inviting. "Let the Pasha of Damascus dread his ill temper," thought I; "his ten thousand horse dare not hurt a hair of a houseless santon's head;"—and resolutely I walked in, made my salam, and sat down to the seasonable repast. Having refreshed myself, I thanked the prince for his good cheer, and wishing him and his remaining camels good health, marched on to Hamah.

At Haleb, where I stopped next to purchase a new steed, I inquired for the French *philosophe*,—the worshipper of *l'utile*. Alas! the very annuity granted to the director of his health on his own precious life, had been the unfortunate cause of his death. A becca-fico, swallowed too greedily bone and all—lest the watchful servant should interpose his veto—had in an evil hour stuck in the philoso-

pher's gullet, and choked him before the removal of his first course.

Descending into the plain which leads to Antakieh,[7] some Turkmen invited me to their camp. As they were come all the way from Diarbeck their country, to dispose of their cattle in the Syrian markets, I thought I could not be far from the mark in saluting them as shepherds. But I mistook the thing completely: they were noblemen. The head of the troop was regularly addressed by his followers as Aga; and, on introducing me to the lady his wife, who was churning her milk, surrounded by the younger ladies his daughters, as actively employed, the one in kneading a barley-cake, the other in working a sheep's wool carpet, and the third in darning her own camel's hair trowsers, he took an opportunity of informing me, in his bad Turkish dialect, of the antiquity of his race and the pure nobility of his blood;—"a boast which he would not have thought it necessary to make, but that lately so many Christian peasants, fled from the oppression of their Pashas, had assumed the name of Turkmen, and brought it into disrepute, by taking their revenge of their tyrannic governors on the innocent traveller." I professed myself highly delighted with the intelligence, and, after most respectfully eating some cream cheese, and drinking some buttermilk in the same respectful manner, bade the exalted circle adieu, and went on. Every

step I performed increased my impatience to cast off my rags,—but the time was not yet come.

At Antakieh I made a party with three merchants, a jenissary, and some domestics, to go together to Scanderoon; there to embark for Smyrna, the final limit of my pilgrimage. The man of war was of course to be our defender. I had nothing to do but to pray, in my quality as santon, for Mahmood's success,—and what could seem less doubtful than that it must be most entire in whatever he undertook? It did one's heart good only to hear from his own lips—ere the journey was well begun—the whole list of feats of bravery performed by his valiant hand. When indeed, a little farther on the road, a discussion arose with a few wandering Coords who evinced some inclination to fleece us, our protector's generous disposition got a little the better of his martial ardour:—"Was it worth while squabbling," he asked, "about a few piastres, especially with wretches whom, if it came to fighting, we could not help annihilating?"—but though, on this occasion, he deplored nothing so much as the valuable time we lost in these debates, yet, when a mile farther on our way a countryman informed us of a more considerable detachment of the same tribe, stationed in a defile between us and our intended resting-place, he was most strenuous for stopping altogether, and lying down where we were,—only for the sake of coolness! However, seeing the mer-

chants determined to push on in spite of his raptures with the place, he took me aside, and,—sagaciously observing that in charging the enemy too vigorously, his belt, in which he had all his money, might burst, —begged of me in a whisper, as one protected by my holiness, to take charge of his purse. Unfortunately, in attempting to slip it unperceived into my hand, the excessive courage which vibrated in his own caused the bag to drop, and with such prodigious clatter as to attract every eye. Mahmood looked ready to faint: but I—very leisurely picking up the purse,—immediately cried out: "The deuce, I think, is in these leaden images,[8] which the Damascus derwishes have given me for their Smyrna brethren:—people will fancy I am made up of gold!"—a speech which amused the merchants, who thought the money mine, but positively enraptured Mahmood, who thus escaped its being known as his.

I do not know what it was that—almost immediately after this transaction—got wrong about my saddle, and made me lag behind a little; but I do remember that, when I called to my companions to wait for me, the merchants thought it a clever joke to spur on their horses, and to leave the good santon, with his great bag of money, alone on the road. I did not think it a very bad joke myself, and—determining to leave those that left me,—while they turned to the left, I turned to the right. I even had the malice, when a little afterwards I caught a

distant glimpse of their procession—with Mahmood closing the rear—just as they were entering the obnoxious defile mentioned above, to fire a pistol; at the report of which the whole troop set off as if possessed, fancying all the Coords of Coordestan at its heels,—and very soon entirely disappeared.

Night coming on apace, I naturally missed my way, and the next morning found I had considerably overshot Scanderoon, which could now be distinctly descried from the mountains. It would have been madness to turn back—with Mahmood's purse in my pocket, as well as without. So I went on, refreshed myself at the nearest village, and there, having made inquiries respecting the road, resolved to give up all immediate thoughts of Smyrna, and to strike into the courier's track to Constantinople, from which I was not far distant. The capital, after all, must be the place for converting my jewels into gold. That weighty matter once accomplished, I should take up my Alexis at Smyrna, in my way to Christendom, where I intended finally to settle, and to commence my new profession of an honest man.

I might have been travelling about five leagues in my new direction, and had just got into the track of the Tartar messengers, when, in fact, a personage of that description passed by me with the customary salute of peace. This I duly returned. Upon which,—the sound of my voice striking the courier as familiar to him—he looked round to survey me.

"Heavens!" cried he presently, "is it the lord Selim I see in this strange attire?" "It is, Feiz-ullah," answered I,—who by this time had likewise recognised my friend. He was no other than the honest fellow who, at Bagdad, had cautioned me against staying in that city, to wait the kehaya's pleasure as to my head, and whom, in utter defiance of all gratitude, I now wished at the devil for his quicksightedness. "You see," continued I, "what it is to have a timorous conscience. I felt so oppressed with the weight of my sins—particularly that of having lived so long among the Wahhabees—that I begged of all the saints in paradise to assist me in wiping out the stain. None heeded my prayer, save Hadjee-Becktash,[9] who one night visited me in my sleep, and bade me take his habit. As you may perceive, it has extracted almost every impurity out of my heart, and I shall soon come forth as spotless as the new-born babe. Meanwhile, tell me what is the news from Bagdad."

"Great," cried Feiz-ullah; "great indeed!—I do not ask whether you remember your friend the kehaya. Suleiman had toiled so many years to give this faulty diamond a sort of false lustre, that he felt loth to throw away his labour, and to own his choice a bad one. Determined to leave a monument of his might, he was too old to begin a new creation. All the insinuations against Achmet therefore were treated as the effects of sheer envy, until a day

when there came to hand a something passing hints; —a packet from the Reïs-effendee, inclosing a letter to the Porte in the kehaya's own hand writing. It represented Suleiman as wholly superannuated; and the child of his favour only modestly proposed to set him aside, and to step into his place. On the receipt of this document, a divan was immediately convened of all the individuals hostile to the kehaya, and the business laid before them. Suleiman wished only to dismiss his old favourite; but being with much difficulty rendered sensible of the danger of this lenity, he at last reluctantly signed the kehaya's doom. Scarce was the order issued, when Achmet himself appeared. He suspected some plot against his authority, and came to daunt his enemies. Suleiman gave him the wonted reception, while the kehaya, casting a look of rage round the astonished circle, only seemed to count the new victims he intended immolating to his safety. No time was to be lost. Aly-khasnadar boldly rushes forward, and strikes the first blow:—all the rest follow. Dropping down on his knees, Achmet now raises towards the Pasha his supplicating hands: but the Pasha had thrown his shawl over his face, in order not to see the impending execution, and in an instant the favourite was despatched. His mangled body, thrown out on the steps of the divan, remained exposed till sunset to the greedy eyes of the populace, and his head,"—added the Tartar, pointing to a little bundle tied behind him,—"I

have here. As it has been carefully pickled, I entertain no doubt of carrying it in very good condition to our gracious sultan."

Feiz-ullah here stopping, I gave a deep sigh, not so much in sorrow for what had happened, as from regret that it had not happened sooner. It however brought me some real advantage, in addition to the pleasure afforded by the fall of an enemy. Feiz-ullah, as a public messenger, every where found horses ready at his command. It was more than santons did. He proposed to me to go in his company; and for the sake of sharing his privilege, I determined to keep up with his pace.

The Tartar rate of travelling leaves little leisure for a journal. The curiosities of the different cities I was scarce allowed time to investigate; but I had the best of every thing on the road. As to my companion, he would not—even after the daintiest meal in the world—forego the douceur he expected for what he used to call the wear and tear of his teeth. Once indeed his demand was resisted, in a malkyané of the Sultana Validé, whose waywode swore he would not part with a single aspre of his mistress's slipper money, for all the booted Tartars in the universe. Feiz-ullah had nothing to do but to curse the sovereign's mother for an old toothless jade as she was, without bowels of compassion. Except on this single occasion, the Tartar's whip, which never quitted his hand, was more powerful than a sceptre;—it was an enchanter's wand: for

if kings themselves lose their right where there is nothing, this little instrument never failed to produce something;—fat fowls, for instance, where a hen had never cackled; sheep in good case, where there was not a blade of grass; and nice fruit, where not a vegetable could be made to grow. Alternately applied with the same spirit to man and beast, its persuasive powers made the most jaded horse go on, and the most reluctant host supply an ample meal.

At Isnik I took leave of my companion, and—with all due respect for Hadjee-Becktash—of his shabby uniform. As we travelled along I had gradually collected all the articles of apparel necessary for my transformation. Here, a rich stuff for a turban; there, a handsome vest and cloak; farther on, fine French cloth trowsers; elsewhere, papooshes bright as burnished brass. With my parcel under my arm I entered a house of entertainment, engaged a snug back chamber, shut myself up, slipped off at a single shake all my uncouth rags; with impious hands shaved close my shaggy hair;[10] nay, without giving them the smallest warning, disturbed all the angels in my very beard,[11] and maimed the lord knows how many tiny sprites, deemed its tenants for life; made a bonfire of my santon's cloak and staff; submitted my person to all sorts of ablution, and, thus purified by fire and water—after standing some time gazing in a state of

nature on the various articles of new apparel, methodically laid out around me,—proceeded leisurely to put on one by one the items of my new garb.

Stepping out of my cell after this refreshing process, so completely metamorphosed as not to be recognised even by the people in the shop, I truly felt like the insect, which only casts off the unsightly slough of the butterfly to come forth when older, a gayer, gaudier, nay younger butterfly. The species of ease and delight derived from my transformation, positively baffles all my powers of description. My chest seemed to dilate, my breathing to acquire a freedom before unknown, and my limbs and gait to have gained a fresh vigour and buoyancy. Though now advanced to the wrong side of thirty, and already beginning before to think myself grown old and faded, I seemed to have dipped afresh in the fountain of youth. Like the revolving year, after passing through the decay of autumn and winter, I had recovered anew all the smiling attributes of spring.

The new companion with whom I engaged in the coffee-house was suited to my new character,—a young Algerine captain of a man of war, come from Constantinople on business, and glad to have me as a fellow traveller to return with to the capital. We talked all the way; I, like all men already somewhat advanced in life, praising times past; while my companion would only laud in the present

tense. "Hold your tongue," cried he, "about your great Hassan. Our little Husseïn" (Kootchook was the new grand Admiral's by-name) "is worth a dozen of him. We make more improvements in the navy in a day now, than you used to do in a twelvemonth. Husseïn sets about every thing at once, has every new invention before it comes out, never loses time in examining, and regularly new models the arsenal from end to end every year. It almost confuses one to see the builders he has collected from every country: France, Sweden, and whence not!—each speaking a different language; each following a different method, and each pointing out the faults of what all the others do. He would sooner build in the Chinese fashion than copy any one who went before him; and his designs, when executed, will prove the finest in the world! Every dock-yard in the empire,—Mytilene, Rhodes, Boodroon, the Dardanelles, Sinope and Galatsch—is vying with the rest which shall knock up a ship of the line with the greatest speed; and the capital prepares to launch a three-decker so prodigious, that none of our seas will have room enough to work her." I laughed at the eulogium; wished my friend the command of this wonder, and stepped into the boat which landed me at Constantinople.

My first care was to inquire after the merchant who, at Khedieh, had so obligingly made me wel-

come to his travelling equipage, for the mere trouble of taking it. At Damascus I had understood him to be gone to the capital: in the capital I found that he had commenced the longer journey to heaven. For not only he was departed this world, but, in order to ensure a good reception in the next, he had piously bequeathed all his property to an hospital of cats and dogs, to the utter exclusion of his nearer biped relations, expressly disinherited, and in fact well able, as I heard, to spare his bequests. My finances being by nature somewhat less brilliant than those of the personages in question, I determined, upon this information, fairly to keep what I before thought I had acquired fairly, and on Djiaffer's own express terms; assured that I did not even do his four-footed legatees—only named by a disposition subsequent to our meeting—an injury of which they could reasonably complain. There were donanmas[12] going forward in the capital; and the Porte, very busy purchasing at all hands diamonds for presents, afforded me an opportunity of selling part of mine to a very great advantage, and still to reserve the stones of the first water for what I deemed the better markets of Vienna and Petersburg. Meantime, informed that some of Djiaffer's cousins, less fortunate than the remainder, had fallen into want, I took upon myself to correct in their behalf their kinsman's omissions, and by paying them, like a good Moslemin, the tithe of my profit, restored

them to ease and comfort. After this I felt quite at peace with my conscience for retaining what certainly no other man breathing had any legal claims upon;—nor even, in truth, the cats themselves.

On each occasion of my passing through Constantinople, since my separation from Spiridion at Chios, something or other had occurred to prevent our meeting:—either my own fear of intruding; or the apprehensions of my friend's other more officious friends; or the subsequent absence of that friend from the capital. I now made a fresh attempt to embrace the companion of my youth—more regretted as I grew older; and called upon the father, but could not see the son. To the indescribable horror of all his friends and relations, he was actually gone on a voyage to the Venetian islands and to the other parts of Christendom; and that, from motives of mere curiosity, and without any views of advantage, save instruction!—The best chance I had of finding him was at Paris or in London.

Mavrocordato had a confidential friend;—a man of weight and respectability, who, throughout all my different vicissitudes, had constantly shown me a more steady and uninterrupted interest than even Mavrocordato himself, and while he never, it must be confessed, had risen quite so high in his admiration of my worth as the latter, never either fell quite so low in his estimation of my qualities as signor Mavrocordato had since chosen to do. I had particularly

noticed Costandino Caridi for one circumstance in his conduct, in which he stood single among his countrymen: namely, that, though far from wealthy himself, he used to keep most aloof from me, whenever I seemed to have the greatest command of cash;—giving as his reason for this singularity, that I never became bearable until I was half starved. This old friend now met me with a totally new face; for though he knew me to possess the amplest means, he yet paid me a degree of attention which I had never before been able to extort from him, even when my situation was most forlorn. In fact, he seemed so very determined to obtain complete possession of my mind by every species of address and flattery, that at last I grew distrustful of him whom I had never distrusted before, and conceived that, through daily society with men of a selfish and intriguing disposition, his own character had at last suffered an entire change. One day, indeed, I could not help telling him so in direct terms. Sick of his obsequiousness, and quite out of patience with his compliments, I ironically begged of him not to waste his breath in flattering one who himself felt so impressed with his unparalleled perfection, as to consider all attempts at praise as inadequate, and to loathe every other compliment paid to him to his face, except that addressed to his good sense, in sound and well-timed abuse.

At this speech signor Caridi, instead of looking

somewhat confused as I expected, began to laugh most immoderately; and forcibly taking me by the hand: "Bravo!" he cried; "this is at last as I wished it. I now have hopes, and shall report accordingly. My commission need no longer be deferred."

"Your commission?" I echoed.

"You remember," resumed Costandino, "the kinsman of Trieste, who so cruelly left you in the lurch at Smyrna?"

"I do," was my reply—"and as an egregious rogue."

"That is precisely," answered Caridi, "the thing he understood *you* to be; and the attribute which made him transfer his views from the son of his relative Sotiri, to another youth—an entire stranger to his blood, but who had been a clerk in his counting-house, and seemed to bear himself as a lad of unexceptionable morals. Unfortunately, poor Elevtheri was not as sound in constitution as in principles; and when your cousin, adopting him as his son, thought it necessary to coax him into being his intended heir, the hapless youth had to undergo such excessive petting, and care, and exclusion from those fresh gales which he used formerly to inhale unrestrained, that the first draught of air he encountered after this change of system became a gale of death to him. Delvinioti, now again adrift, wrote to me to make fresh inquiries after his

worthy cousin Anastasius, in order that, should age, or disappointment, or other desirable circumstances have produced wholesome fruits in his bosom, new proposals might be made to him, on the old conditions. The letter which I received to this purpose is dated six months back; and I confess my hopes of ever seeing you again were so slender, that I was going to answer it as relating to a desperate business—when suddenly you reappeared. Since that period I have neglected no opportunity of watching your conduct, and trying your temper: and you yourself must do me the justice to own that I have laid every trap in your way which my imagination could suggest. I therefore now begin to think mere time has done enough, to warrant my expecting from motives so powerful as a respectable situation and a rich inheritance, all that still remains to be achieved; and I hesitate no longer to stamp your improvement with the mark of your cousin's splendid offer."

"Or rather," cried I, "to submit my prudence to some fresh and arduous trial—in order to ascertain whether I am weak enough to be deceived a second time by the same wily relation, and can be made to perform another journey longer than the first, only to look at the conclusion like a more egregious fool."

"Right!" exclaimed Caridi, "you are fully warranted to form such a surmise; and therefore, as a security against its being realized, I see nothing for

you to do, but to take this letter of credit to defray your expenses. It includes, as you see, every place on your way up the Adriatic, and ends with Trieste. Thus, should you and your cousin after all not suit each other, you will have been franked during a pleasant voyage, and treated with a peep at Christendom, which at any rate I understand you meant to visit."

I had indeed occasionally thrown out some idea of the kind, as a thing which might be of advantage to my child's education; but, when directly called upon to decide whether I chose to sit down for life in distant realms, to whose habits and manners I was a perfect stranger, I recoiled from the thought, and for a while kept turning a deaf ear to Caridi's remonstrances. At last he set in so strong a light the expediency, in my situation, of retiring to Franguestan, both for the purpose of securing my fortune to my son, and for that of providing that precious child with the best instruction, that I suffered myself to be persuaded, and resolved, after taking up my Alexis at Smyrna, gradually to work my way out of the precincts of Islamism, and into those where soars the cross. I deposited the letter of credit in my pocket-book, converted my cash into bills on the best houses, and prepared for my journey. Unfortunately an illness which awaited me the very moment I had leisure to attend to my health, and a stab which, when convalescent, I received one night

in a mistake, detained me about eight months longer, ere I was able finally to set out.

All things being ready at last for my departure from Stambool, I ascended the hill crowned by Noor-Osmany, and seeking the loftiest galleries of this superb building, took a last parting view of the proud capital which I had made the first scene of my youthful revels, which, during the fairest portion of my life I had considered as my home, and which I was now probably going to quit for ever. For the last time my eye, moistened with tears, wandered over the dimpled hills, glided along the winding waters, and dived into the deep and delicious dells in which branch out its jagged shores. Reverting from these smiling outlets of its sea-beat suburbs to its busy centre, I surveyed in slow succession every chaplet of swelling cupolas, every grove of slender minarets, and every avenue of glittering porticoes, whose pinnacles dart their golden shafts from between sombre cypress groves into the azure sky. I dwelt on them as on things I was never to behold more; and not until the evening had deepened the veil cast over the varied scene, from a bright orange to purple, and from purple to the sable hue of the night, did I tear myself away from the beloved spot. I then bade the city of Constantine farewell for ever, descended the high-crested hill, stepped into the heaving boat, turned my back upon the shore, and sunk my regrets in

the sparkling wave, across which the moon had already flung a trembling bar of silvery light,—pointing my way, as it were, to other regions yet unknown.

During the whole of my voyage to Smyrna, one only thought kept possession of my soul. It was the rapture which awaited me on landing, in pressing to my bosom my darling child. Four years and a half had now elapsed since his joyless birth: —he must be grown full of grace, loveliness, and artless prattle; heir to all the charms of his mother, and ready to return all the endearments of his father: and such became, on stepping on shore, my impatience to behold the fond object of these daily dreams, that it scarcely left me patience to go with composure through the tedious forms and functions, from which none are exempt who transfer their persons and goods from the watery element to a firmer footing on land.

When indeed, after traversing the busier parts of the city around the quay, I arrived at that remote and lonely suburb, where all my affections would at last be crowned, and which, but for my melancholy search after my lost Euphrosyne, I might never have visited, or at least, have remembered:—when I passed by the obscure hovel which I entered while my lovely victim was praying on her death-bed for a last farewell from her frantic destroyer; which I

left without seeing her; and where she resigned her spotless soul to heaven,—fresh clouds of despair seemed for a moment to overcast the sunshine of my hopes; and the solace of the son was forgotten in the woes of the mother: or rather, I felt that after losing the parent as I did, I deserved not to find the child: —but this gloom again subsided when I beheld the abode where I had left my Alexis.

It was only on its threshold that my delightful vision at last vanished entirely. There I first heard, and from strangers, not only that the merchant entrusted with the small pittance for my child's support had become a bankrupt, and had disappeared,—but that even the woman, in whose care I had left my darling babe, had absconded. Nobody could give me the least information respecting herself or her charge; nor—what seemed the strangest part of the story—did distress or failure of the promised supplies appear to have been her motive; for so far from leaving to any succour the smallest chance of reaching its destination, she had evidently taken pains to baffle all inquiry respecting the place of her concealment. Had Sophia still enjoyed the breath of life, I should —— But she was gone to her doom! Yet might her evil spirit still haunt the scene of her infernal wickedness.

Once, on my homeward journey from the eternal desert—oppressed with heat, and in vain soliciting

my cruise for a last drop of water to wet my parched lips—I had, when on the point of fainting with exhaustion, beheld in a valley before me the semblance of a limpid lake, ready to slake my raging thirst and to lave my wearied limbs; had collected my last strength to reach its winding banks, and, when near the delusive spot, had found the lying vision exchanged for no other reality but sands more dry and burning than the sands already traversed: but what was this disappointment of the sense,—even with life at stake—compared with that which struck my inmost soul at this dreadful moment!—for the anguish of the actual shock was still exceeded by the gloom of my forebodings; since it seemed that no other motive could have made the person I sought take pains to evade my inquiry, but having made away with, or abandoned my child. Probably it had long ceased to exist; long probably had my Alexis followed his hapless mother to the grave; and, while I was conjuring up in my busy fancy every brightest image of his beauty and his sprightliness, his lifeless form was already changed to dust: or, if he still was permitted to breathe in common with the meanest of insects, on this vile inhospitable earth, it could only be to experience sufferings worse than death;—every pang of illness, of desertion, and of want. The least untoward fate I dared imagine for the relic of my adored Euphrosyne

was that of begging his bread like a wretched orphan from door to door. Even his father might have met him without knowing whom he met;—might have bestowed on his own babe the scanty boon of common and churlish charity!

Impressed with this idea, I examined with anxious solicitude every child on which fell my searching eye: stopped to inquire into its parentage and birthplace; and suffered no little creature under five or six years of age to escape, until it had passed through the regular ordeal of my interminable questions: but no child I beheld resembled my Alexis; none made my heart bound on meeting its first glance. "Ah!" was now my constant cry: "why had I ever lost sight even for an instant of that heart's only remaining treasure?—Why had I roamed far from the humble abode in which centered all my joys? Would it not have been better a thousand times to possess my child, without bread to eat, than all the riches of the universe without my darling child?"

At last a faint ray of hope broke in, and threw a gleam of light upon my dark despondency. It dimly showed my mind a track to pursue, though it marked not its issue. Indeed so vague, so faint, so flitting remained the forms which it here and there pointed out, that I feared to trust to them as to realities. A Smyrniote lady, who had witnessed

my distress, and had even assisted me in my inquiries, sent to inform me of a circumstance which she had heard by accident. The wife of a foreign consul at Alexandria, on a visit the year before with a friend at Smyrna, was said on her return to Egypt to have taken with her, in the capacity of waiting-woman, a person intrusted by a stranger with a child of such singular beauty, that the consuless, unblessed with a family of her own, rather considered the unprotected babe as a prize than as an encumbrance. Further particulars to identify the child could not be collected at Smyrna, and rather than engage in a tedious and ineffectual correspondence with Alexandria, I resolved immediately to embark for that well known place.

Walking impatiently backward and forward on the quay, while the boat was getting ready, I spied a large circle of townspeople gathered round a jenissary, employed in telling a tale of wonder. It was no other than the recital of the innumerable Coords killed by the valiant Mahmood, in defending a certain purse which I was prevailed upon to pocket on the road to Scanderoon, and which I still happened to have in my possession;—nor need I add, that Mahmood himself was the relater of his own achievements. At this instance of shameless bragging I could not resist slipping behind the dauntless hero, and whispering in his ear: "Coward, you lie; here is the object of your

vauntings, undiminished; and claim it if you dare!"—upon which, throwing the purse down before its rightful owner, I folded my arms in each other, and waited some little time to see what step he would take:—but he only stood still, speechless and pale as a ghost, looking alternately at the money and at me, until, giving up all hopes of his uttering a syllable, I flung the purse to a beggar, and stepped into the boat.

CHAPTER XII.

Behold me now for the third and last time on my passage to Egypt; a country which, after having been visited successively by famine, plague, and the Capitan-Pasha, had, to crown its misfortunes, been left at last divided between Ismaïl, Schaich-el-belled at Cairo, and Ibrahim and Mourad, masters of the Saïd:—an arrangement which increased the expenses of the chief in the same proportion in which it diminished his income; since it fixed on his very boundary an enemy, against whom it was necessary always to keep his province prepared. Fortunately Ismaïl's abilities were equal to his task. By his firmness he awed the open hostility of the party in Upper Egypt, and by his vigilance he defeated the treachery in his own councils: he made the heavier burthens which he was forced to impose seem lighter by causing them to bear more equally on all classes: he applied himself with equal skill to curing wounds inflicted, and to obviate impending evils; and, finally, he carried from the mountains of Lybia to the city of Cairo a line of walls, which frowned defiance on the undisciplined troops of the Beys in the Saïd.

After these labours, Ismaïl seemed, in 1790, to have nothing further left to do but to sit down, and to enjoy the fruits of his arduous toil, when that scourge of the east, the plague, imperfectly subdued, broke out afresh with a virulence far exceeding its former fury. From the close-wedged hovels of the poor it soon reached—more ravenous in proportion as it found richer food—to the spacious palaces of the great, and spread dismay and death among the haughty mamlukes, as it had done among the humble natives. At last it penetrated into the abode of the Schaich-el-belled himself, and struck its venomed dart at the chief, while in the very act of concerting measures to stem its devastations. In the midst of all his glory Ismaïl fell a prey to the contagion,—and a few hours saw him dragged from the pinnacle of power to the brink of the grave.

But the disease which conquered his body could boast no victory over his mighty soul. To the last his mind continued intent upon the welfare of Egypt. Finding his end draw near, he cast his eyes around, to seek among his followers a fit successor,—one able to support, at his fall, the fabric raised by his genius. Summoning all his friends for the last time into his presence, he offered the reversion of his dignity successively to Hassan-bey Djeddawee, to Aly-bey Defterdar, and to all his

other veterans, whose abilities or power seemed equal to the task.

But no one dared to face it. Deprived, by the same scourge under which their chief was sinking, of their most faithful adherents, these ambitious leaders, who at other times would have steeped their swords in blood for Ismaïl's rich succession, now wholly unnerved, were compelled one by one to decline the tempting honours, when, spread out before their eyes, these coveted grandeurs only waited their acceptance. The supreme rank therefore devolved on the very last of those to whom the offer was made,—on Ismaïl's own creature Osman, surnamed Toobbal; a youth as crooked in mind as he was distorted in body: but who alone with alacrity accepted what all the others with deep regret refused.

Wishing to give a last instance of his power, or rather, to render manifest to all men breathing the last act of his authority, Ismaïl commanded the proclamation of Toobbal to take place while he himself still had life. From his death-bed he heard his successor announced; and gave up the ghost.

Toobbal had accepted the dignity of Schaich-el-belled, which he was conscious he could not maintain, only to sell it to the Beys in the Saïd. He sent them speedy advice of the death of Ismaïl, and of the utter debility of his party. On this welcome intelligence they immediately descended along the

western bank of the Nile; but, startled by the unlooked for and new fortifications which they found at Dgizé, they retraced their steps backward, until they could collect sufficient craft to cross the river; and, on the reverse of the chain of Arabic mountains again redescended with such rapidity, that scarce had the Beys of Cairo received intelligence of their retreat from before Dgizé, when they rushed from behind the Mokhadem, and summoned the capital to surrender.

At this appalling intelligence, the Beys marched out with what force they could muster, headed by the traitor Toobbal. He seized the first opportunity of passing over to the enemy, and led his new friends triumphant into the capital, while his former party fled to the Saïd. There the remnant of Aly-bey's creations and of Hassan Pasha's tools reluctantly fixed its quarters, and there its now oldest relic, Djeddawee—suffered to resume his ancient government of Es-souan—has since been left undisturbed to reflect on his singular fate:—a fate ever intent upon rendering the bravest of a fearless race, celebrated only through his flights. Toobbal, who immediately abdicated his recent honours in favour of his new competitors, soon attained the oblivion he deserved; while the country to the south of Cairo was allotted to Ibrahim, and the regions lying northward of the capital fell to the share of Mourad.

The person who gave me this account was a

middle-aged Greek of singular appearance, whom I met on my way at Cos. Fresh arrived from the country whither I was bound, he had excited my curiosity by his consequential manner. On some slight offence given him in one of the coffee-houses under the gigantic plane-tree in the market-place: —"Is this a treatment," he cried, trembling with rage, "for a Capitan-Pasha?"—at which words I started, and, after considering the personage for some time with increased wonder:—"Capitan-Pasha! To whom, I beseech?" was the question which I could not help proposing.

"To Mourad-bey, to be sure," was the unexpected answer.

"In order to maintain a Lord High Admiral,"—I ventured to observe,—"one should have at least the shadow of a navy."

"And who has its showiest substance," rejoined my informer, "if Mourad has not? His fleet rides at anchor under his very windows at Dgizé; is the best appointed within an hundred miles of the sea; and, when the Nile has attained its full height, sails up as high as Boolak, and down as low as Fostat. At other times indeed it remains properly moored along the quay of the palace, for fear of running aground in the river."

"Equal to its own merits, no doubt, were the naval achievements which raised you to the honour of commanding this formidable squadron?"

"As you may suppose.—When Osman-bey Tamboordjee grew tired of the banishment which Hassan procured him to Stambool, I, Nicola-Hadjee of Tchesmé, was the man who conveyed him to Derneh, whence he easily regained his home. This signal service recommended me to his party, and made Mourad give me the command of his naval force, as soon as he learned my transcendent abilities. Unfortunately I was tenacious of the privileges attached to my high office, and one day battered a kiashef's windows for protecting a runaway sailor. This spirited act brought me into disgrace, and, like other great people, I now travel for a change of air."

"It gives me pleasure," replied I, "to find that the rage for novelties is not confined to Constantinople." I however condoled with the ex-Capitan Pasha on his dismissal, and, having filled a bag with the fine bergamots of the island miscalled Stanchio, reimbarked for my destination.

On the coast of Syria the reïs took on board, much against my advice, two Latin friars,—the one an Italian from the convent of Jerusalem, and the other a Spaniard from the hospice at Ramleh.

If they had been Greeks they could not have quarrelled more unceasingly. Under the delusion that no one understood their idiom, they were constantly refreshing each other's memory with all the little peccadilloes of their respective establish-

ments. "The convent of Jerusalem had suffered the schismatics to invade all the sanctuaries; the hospice at Ramleh had bribed the Arabs to plunder the pilgrims: the monks of the former place set their blood on fire with drams; those of the latter with pimento and quarrels."

That—whatever might be the cause—the humours of these representatives of their respective communities were actually in a state of high fermentation, no one could deny. More than once I expected an explosion, such as should end fatally for both. Luckily breath only—not blood—was wasted; and we had the satisfaction to land both fra. Diego and fra. Giacomo, sound in body, though very sore in mind, on the quay of Alexandria.

My feet had not yet pressed the long looked-for shore, when I began to inquire for the consular mansion in which centered all my hopes. With trembling steps and throbbing heart I hied me to its threshold. A vague report, an idle story might have deceived me: I might have gone away from the child I came to seek; and, when near the door, I was on the point of turning back, in order yet a while to defer the inquiry, and to gather more fortitude for an answer, which must bring with it either inexpressible happiness or bitter disappointment.

Apprehensive lest the sight of a stranger in the Turkish garb might alarm the family, I first gave a gentle knock. No one answered:—I then re-

peated the summons. A domestic at last appeared. "Both his master and mistress were out," he said; "and it was uncertain when they would return."

"Had they a child with them?" I asked.

"There was a child in the house."

"Found at Smyrna,—and belonging to a stranger?"

"Oh no! brought up in the family by its own mother."

This seemed to dash all my hopes to the ground! However, "might I see the little boy?" I again asked.

He too had been taken out to walk.

"Where?"

"It was impossible to tell."

Perplexed, I now left word I would call again, and withdrew from the door in deep despondency. Yet, when I reflected that the servants might be strangers to the concerns of their masters, and these latter not desirous to own their little favourite a foundling, I did not entirely despair. I paced up and down the road in sight of the mansion, to watch the coming home of the boy.

Nor was I long without descrying at a distance a child approaching, whose dress belonged not to the country. A female held it by the hand; but from *her* my very first glance recoiled as from a total stranger—one who bore not the least resemblance to the nurse of my Alexis.

"It cannot be he!" sighed I to myself;—and yet,

so playfully did the little fellow trip along, so erect was his gait, and so noble his mien,—with so lively and inquisitive a manner did he stop to survey each new object on his way,—that I envied his too happy parents, and could immediately have given up all paternal claims elsewhere, for a good title in the treasure before me. "Ah!" thought I, "had this angel been my own!"—But as he drew nearer, as by degrees I discerned more of his countenance and features, as I became enabled more distinctly to trace the outline of his radiant front, of his dimpled downy cheek, and of his coral lip,—as above all he himself, with a look at once arch and innocent, fixed upon me his full bright eye—that eye which disclosed the whole heaven of his heart,—O God! O God! all Euphrosyne at once burst upon my sense; entire conviction in an instant filled my mind. I felt it must be,—it *was* my own Alexis: I beheld my own babe!

Unable to repress my emotion, I darted forward, and was going to seize upon my treasure,—when the woman, who already from a distance had noticed my eager look, and had made a circuit to avoid my approach, snatched up the child, and, alarmed at my frantic manner, ran screaming to the house.

Fearful of increasing her fright, I purposely slackened my pace, and gave her time to gain admittance, ere I followed her lovely charge to the door: but in spite of this forbearance, I found not

the less its bolts shot against me. No entreaty, however earnest, could obtain their unsheathing. "Strangers," was the plea, "never were admitted when the consul was abroad." I was not even allowed—hard as I begged for the trifling boon—another view of my Alexis from without. "What business could I have with the child? An evil eye, or an evil intent, must with reason be apprehended:" and lest I should by my urgency confirm the growing distrust, I at last retired. But I had beheld my boy; and the tumult in my breast, though extreme, was a tumult of bliss!

As soon as, by my calculation, the consular pair must be come home, I called again. After a little parleying within, of which I could not guess the drift, I was told I might see the lady.

This promised well.—"For the wife to be appointed my interlocutor"—thought I,—"she must know my business, and have made up her mind to acquiesce in my right." I was ushered into a back chamber, where however so many attendants crowded in close after me, that it looked as if they either intended or expected some violence.

Presently walked into the room a stately matron, who, disdaining to be seated, and of course keeping me standing, asked with a sort of lofty civility in what she could oblige her unknown visitor; but, when informed, affected the utmost amazement at my demand. "She was wholly ignorant of the

circumstances alluded to,—had no stranger's offspring under her roof. The little boy I met was the son of her own servant:—the mother, marrying again, had left him in her care; and she had no knowledge of any other child. As to the Smyrna transaction, on which I founded my claim, it must be the invention of some idle person, or the report of some enemy." In a word, my Alexis was refused me, and the humblest supplication could not even obtain for a trembling father the permission to give his child one single embrace. It was feared I might cast some spell upon the boy. "In fact"—it was observed —"I might have done so already:" and presently the lady, affecting apprehensions for her own precious safety, hastily withdrew, while her servants peremptorily urged me not to protract my intrusion.

Even I, at the moment, saw no advantage in staying; for, whether the consuless believed her own story or not, it was plain that she had framed it with deliberation, and meant to support it with boldness. Any remonstrance on my part could therefore only redouble her caution, and perhaps give me the appearance of temerity,—nay, be construed into an act of violence. It was wiser that I should appear to submit, till I had acquired a little more local information of the personages and circumstances, and had armed myself with such proof, not only of my right to a child I had lost, but of its identity with the child I had found,

as could not be resisted, either with justice, with reason, or with safety. Meantime I retired for the present,—but full of dismay, doubt, and disappointment.

Invited by a stone that lay on the road-side, I sat down—to ruminate upon what had occurred. "After all,"—was the first reflection which passed through my mind—"may not my excessive wish to find my child have deceived me? May I not have cause to distrust my own imagination, rather than the veracity of others? So vague were the reports which had brought me to Alexandria, so perfectly did my fears always balance my hopes, so little could I at any time have been justified in laying the least stress on my expectations, that, with an indifferent person addressed as I had been, the account of the consuless would have found implicit credence: and only because I was not sufficiently unconcerned in the business impartially to weigh the evidence on both sides; because I could only bear to dwell upon such circumstances as seemed to favour my own hopes; because the child I had met presented a resemblance —anxiously sought in whatever infant I beheld—to the bright image impressed upon my mind, did I persevere thus to consider myself certain of what others would have long begun to doubt—or rather —would have ceased to believe.

"But was that resemblance itself, on which I thus boldly built my conviction, so great as it appeared

to my unbounded eagerness?—Beauty alone surely could not make it so. However heavenly a child of Euphrosyne ought to be, it still was not the only child on this globe, entitled to bear the countenance of a cherub!—and, as to any other more definite conditions of similitude, they could hardly yet be said to exist in a very striking degree, in the still vague and uncertain lineaments of childhood; particularly where their very symmetry was such as to prevent any decisive identifying peculiarity. However, supposing even the likeness to have been as great as it was possible to conceive; how often is such resemblance found to be the mere effect of chance!

"Should then"—continued I—"this single circumstance be allowed to outweigh the solemn assertions of people, holding a respectable rank in society, and a conspicuous situation in the place; of people not seemingly interested to disgrace themselves by a tale of fraud, and, though taken wholly by surprise, yet agreeing perfectly in their account with that which their servants had given before them?—especially when the female I found about the child, instead of being the nurse whom I left with my babe, and whom an idle report had placed about the consuless as her own attendant, was a totally different person."

Here my reason, having urged all it could think of to check my imagination, ceased its remonstrances: but spite of its arguments, my feelings would not be convinced. When with the report

spread at Smyrna, and with the consuless's own acknowledgment that a woman no longer in the family was mother to the child, I combined an indescribable something in the look and manner of all concerned, which bespoke them to be acting parts rehearsed before; and above all,—when I reflected upon those internal yearnings which, first and only felt, among all the children I had seen, in favour of this angel now so near me, could only be considered as the cry of the blood, I still persisted in my former belief, and resolved to set on foot, as soon as I had secured a shelter for my own person, the most minute and circumstantial perquisitions.

My inquiries were chiefly carried on among the neighbours and tradesmen who, from their situation and concerns, must be best acquainted with the consul's family and domestics—and this was the result:—

Neither the child nor its pretended mother had been known in Egypt previous to the lady's return from Smyrna. The person who called herself, but who had never obtained credit for being the real parent of the beauteous infant, had very soon after her arrival again quitted the consular mansion, to marry and to follow to his native island a taooshan; and the little stranger, left behind, had continued not the less to experience in the consular family such truly parental tenderness, as to render evil tongues first busy with the name of the consul, and at last with the fair fame of the consuless herself.

Mine was a conclusion which affected the honour or virtue of either party in a very different point of view. When, in addition to the circumstances here mentioned, I moreover reflected upon the description of the pretended mother, and found how accurately it tallied with that of the woman entrusted with my Alexis at Smyrna, I became confirmed in my original belief, and no longer retained the smallest doubt of two things: firstly, that the child was my own, and secondly, that the consul and his wife had fully intended that I never should recover it. Determined in some way to obtain a treasure which nature had denied them, they had stooped to steal the offspring of another; and, having already set at defiance both the tongues of slander and the voice of truth, it could not be doubted but that they were fully resolved to go any lengths in support of their imposition and their theft.

Nor did theirs appear a scheme of great danger or of great difficulty. The testimony of a respectable family, fixed at Alexandria in a public situation, must intrinsically offer so much more weight than the bare assertion of a stranger,—of a roving individual, on whom the very mode of his appearance cast the air of an adventurer, that, so far from the consul having to fear any blame for not admitting my unsupported claim, the only conduct for which he must incur unavoidable censure would be the weakness of giving too easy credence to my statement, and committing to my suspicious care, upon

my bare word, the fate of a lovely unprotected babe. Until I could back my pretensions by the most irrefragable proofs, the consul must be justified to every indifferent beholder in treating my claims, my complaints, and my threats, as those of an impostor, only come with extortionary or vindictive views.

Yet how was I to obtain those proofs, the want of which must leave me patiently resigned to my wrongs, and quiet spectator of my Alexis remaining the undisputed property of strangers? My right to my own progeny had always appeared to me so notorious and so incontestable—I so fully expected to find its depositaries only sighing for a release from their trust, and alarmed at my protracted silence; I had so little idea that there existed on the face of the globe a being disposed to rear at his expense a child, the deserted offspring of an unknown stranger; and I so much less conceived the possibility of there being an individual anxious to claim my poor foundling as his own legitimate progeny, that not only I had never thought of bringing the legal vouchers for my paternity to Egypt, but had not even had its proofs duly established in the place where it commenced. How difficult therefore must it be, after so much time elapsed, to obtain on that subject any sufficient or satisfactory evidence! Euphrosyne, when she became a mother, was a deserted female; she died a lonely outcast; and Alexis, left from the moment he saw

the light of day in the obscurity of entire abandonment, had passed the first period of his wretched existence unclaimed by a father, unowned by a relation, and in such entire concealment from all who could feel the least interest in substantiating his parentage, that I myself, the first time I beheld him, had to recur to testimonials on which no one else durst have founded a similar conviction, ere I pressed him to my bosom as my own flesh and blood. Even after that meeting, I had never come forward in the world as his parent:—on the contrary;—without on any occasion ostensibly affording him the care becoming that sacred character, I had only one instant—and as it were by stealth—beheld my babe, from that moment again to leave it wholly uninquired after, and to roam to the regions most distant from its abode. Two individuals indeed possessed my secret,—were apprised of my sentiments;—the nurse, entrusted with the person of my child, and the merchant, depositary of the poor pittance left for its education: but the man was become a bankrupt, the woman had betrayed her trust. The one could nowhere be found to give evidence in my behalf; and the other was no doubt amply paid to back the untrue tale of my adversaries.

All these circumstances, however, only rendered my task more difficult, without in the least altering the line of conduct I was bound to pursue. Ere unavailing remonstrances could be safely changed

into more peremptory measures, I must try to collect what judicial proofs—scanty though they might be—Providence had still left within my reach.

In order to proceed on this arduous business with all the advantages of local knowledge and all the diligence of a direct interest, I first thought of going back to Smyrna myself,—thence, if necessary, to proceed on to Scyra, and to bribe the nurse in the cause of truth more richly than she had been in that of falsehood: but considerations which I durst not disregard prevented me from pursuing this plan. Common report represented the consul and his family as intending early in spring to return to Europe. In that case my child would again be removed, and that, to realms wholly beyond my confined sphere of action;—and, whether the journey really was in agitation or not, to absent myself from Alexandria, or even in that place to lose sight a single instant of my boy, seemed to me highly dangerous, lest, availing themselves of the opportunity, his unjust detainers should drag him to some spot where they might baffle all my attempts to discover his abode, or at least deride all my efforts to enforce my sacred right.

I therefore determined not to stir from the spot, and to employ the best and most intelligent of my remaining friends at Smyrna, to act for me in that city and in the Archipelago. Informing the trusty agent of all the particulars of my case, I begged he would collect all the testimonials attainable in my

favour. The letter was sent by a messenger, who promised to use the greatest possible speed; and, till the answer should come, I prayed to God to grant me patience.

The paltry lodging where meanwhile I fixed my residence obliquely faced the consular mansion. No important occurrence within its wall, productive of external symptoms, could well escape my observation; and, while I hired three or four lynx-eyed emissaries to prowl about and to report on every event at the outposts, I myself remained immoveably stationed in my own quarters, of which the lofty terrace commanded all the accessible parts of the enemy's corps-de-logis. Determined not to stir from my observatory while my Alexis remained within side the opposite walls, I continued day after day in the same unalterable posture, concealed behind the lattice-work of my window, waiting an answer to my letter, and watching the abode of my child.

Sometimes indeed the tediousness of my situation was relieved by the inexpressible pleasure of seeing the sweet cherub himself, when taken out to enjoy his little exercise before the door; and beyond all conception was the rapture with which my eager eye pursued my darling infant, in the various little gambols and frolics, suggested by his delight at his short and rare emancipation from an irksome confinement: for even to him an excursion was now

become a rare occurrence. It seems that the dread of my secret designs constantly haunted my adversaries, and never, after my visit, as before, did they suffer my child to be taken to any distance, or even out of sight of the threshold, on which moreover—besides the woman who attended him—always stood in waiting three or four male domestics, with eyes riveted on the boy, during the whole of the time he remained out.

All this however proved how highly he was prized, with what tenderness he was treated, and how much his infantine happiness must be consulted by those who detained him from his father; and amidst all my impatience I still blessed God, and sometimes almost my opponents themselves—miserable as they made me—for their love of my child.

For fear of unnecessarily exciting a premature alarm, which must still increase the distrust of the consular family, and diminish the liberty of my boy, I took care never to show myself out of doors in the daytime; and only at night, and when all else in Alexandria made repose its only business, ventured out to seek the little air and exercise which my health indispensably required.

The detached cluster of habitations of which mine was the humblest, stood nearly midway between the busy haunts of the modern town and the deserted site of the ancient city; and it was among

the gloomy ruins of the latter that I by preference went at dusk to take my lonely walk. The few straggling pillars—some nodding on their bases, and others deprived of their capitals—which, though dismal trunks at best, still stood erect among the prostrate ruins around, as the lonely memorials of countless myriads gone by, presented to my imagination a fate so like my own, that I often thought I read in the looks of these impassible monuments the soothing sympathy withheld from me by man.

One evening, after a few hasty turns round that wide deserted area, which once contained the finest library, the most celebrated school, and the most turbulent population of antiquity, I sat down to rest myself in the dreariest part of the dreary solitude, on the margin of a yawning catacomb, whose sloping gallery seemed to search the inmost bowels of the earth. Suddenly, in the midst of my melancholy musings, sprang up from the dark recesses of the subterraneous vault, almost underneath my feet, a phantom of preternatural appearance, which, after taking two or three strides, stopped to look round; but no sooner caught the first glimpse of my person, than it again darted forward, and disappeared among the mounds of crumbling stone. Except two large glaring eyes, I had been able to distinguish no one feature, intervening between the monstrous turban and enormous beard, which en-

circled the face of this strange figure. Its height seemed to exceed the ordinary stature of man. Wrapped up in an ample robe which trailed on the ground, it glided along rather than walked; and I thought that if it belonged to the world above ground, and not to that of the Goules from which it came last, it could scarcely be regarded as any thing but a lineal descendant of Pharaoh's own body sorcerers.

To whatever class of beings the apparition might belong, this seemed equally certain, that it felt little wish to be better known:—but it was precisely that very circumstance which made me resolve to pursue it and find out its real nature; heedless of dangers which caution might not be able to see, or courage to overcome. The motion of my shadow, cast forward by the moon, officiously announcing my intention, caused the mysterious personage—who seemed to have stopped behind some wall or pier to reconnoitre his observer—again to rush forward from his ambush, and to go on. It is true he lengthened his steps in such a way only as to avoid the appearance of positively running away from my pursuit: but his knowledge of the intricacies and windings of the place gave him nevertheless so great an advantage, that in spite of my superior agility I hardly gained ground upon him, except when expressly allowed to overshoot the mark, by his sliding behind some

friendly wall or hillock, whence he no sooner saw me on a wrong scent, than away he again dived in an opposite direction.

Thus did the chase last full half an hour, when, to my utter astonishment, I found myself again brought back, by an immense circuit, to the mouth of the very cave from whose dark entrails the phantom first had darted forth, and into whose unfathomable abyss it would now again irrecoverably have plunged, but for the very contrivance most pointedly intended to avoid detection:—I mean that of a garment ample beyond all reasonable dimensions. At the very entrance of the vault it caught a projecting stone, and, in defiance of all the pulling and tearing of its wearer, would not be disentangled, but brought the mysterious fugitive to a dead stop.

I now grasped him tight round the waist, forced up his head which he was trying to hold down, and by the light of the moon beheld—with wonder beheld, spite of his enormous turban—the Italian improvvisatore who at Smyrna, after promising me promotion in the empire of reason, had cruelly left me to languish in that of despotism. "Heavens," cried I, "Cirico, is it you?"

"It is," answered the detected poet, after he had stood awhile considering whether he should say yes or no: "and would you had been in Erebus, ere you found me out!"

"And what business, may I ask, can a man,

accustomed to preach Jacobinism along the highways, have to dress like a bearded Magus, and take up his abode under ground in the catacombs of Egypt?"

"Do you promise secrecy?" said Cirico—looking at me earnestly.

"While I live," cried I;—"provided, for once, you choose to abstain from fiction."

"Then, listen," replied the son of Apollo, "and be content with plain prose;"—upon which, offering me a seat beside him on the prostrate obelisk to which we now had advanced, he began as follows.

"You remember my sudden disappearance from Smyrna. Prompted however to my departure, rather by an abstract wish to leave that city than by a distinct preference for any other particular place, I had myself rowed to the first vessel in the harbour ready to set sail, and, when under weigh, asked whither I was going? To Alexandria was the answer,—and it pleased me. I remembered hearing a certain embassador at Constantinople describe his consul in Egypt as a man entirely absorbed, not in trade or politics, but in magnetism; and it was on the never-sufficiently-to-be-eulogised virtues of that admirable fluid that I built my little scheme. The chain of evidence as to my identity, between the sea-ports of the Levant more to the westward, and Alexandria, was easily broken by my landing at Damiat, assuming the garb of the

country, and only appearing at Alexandria some months after my departure from Smyrna, so completely smoke-dried, and with such a beard, and such a benish, that, but for pulling off my turban as you did, you yourself would never have found me out. I therefore burst upon this new world like one of those torrents which, from an unknown source in the snowy Alps, rush all at once into the vale below. It must however be confessed, that, when first introduced to my intended patient in the character of an Italian nobleman on his way to the Pyramids, the colossal figure of the uncouth Scythian, his shaksheer hanging about his heels, his turban awry on his head, and still more than all that, his face resembling that of an old leopard, with a pair of whiskers diverging from under his broad flat nose like the bristles of a clothes-brush, so disconcerted me, as at first to put my whole story completely out of my head: nor was the little tale I had prepared of much use when recalled to my remembrance; for I soon found by the consul's account that he himself was filled with so vast a supply of the magnetic virtue, as only to want a person equally void of intellect and full of faith, for the purpose of being made the passive recipient of his all-penetrating influence. Nothing therefore was required of me in this affair, but to seem a chef-d'œuvre of natural dulness,—a vacuum that should contain no single thought of its own, to clash with the brilliant

coruscations of which I was to become the unconscious vehicle."

"And could an improvvisatore of the first water," cried I—interrupting Cirico—"submit thus to conceal his talents; to hide his light under a bushel; to stem the tide of his poetic *estro*, by which I have been more than once nearly overwhelmed?"

"Friend!" resumed Cirico, "no difficulties could for an instant arrest a genius like mine. A plan immediately presented itself to my mind, which might combine in any given proportion the imbecility required by drowsy magnetism, and the unremitting worship vowed by me to the Muses.—The consul's offers were accepted; I left the pyramids to their fate, and staid to be magnetised.

"But!—when thrown into the customary coma; in what shape do you think that the emanations of the consul's intellect, with which his dumpy claws had been cramming me until the perspiration had drenched his grisly whiskers, flowed from my poetic lips? Can a bell—whatever substance may strike it—emit any sound but that of metal? Can a harp—touched by whom it may—be mistaken, for a drum? Then let who might magnetise Giacinto Cirico, I still could only spout Italian operas. Availing myself of the leisure which my apparent idiocy gave me, to spend the whole day in perfecting compositions intended some time or other to eclipse those of Metastasio himself, I recited these high-

wrought productions of my own Muse, on the magnetic evenings, as the spontaneous explosions of the consul's prompting genius: and, though this gentleman felt a little startled at first at the strange form his emanations assumed, and wondered he should have inspired me—of all things under heaven—with the *scenas* of a pastoral; he soon discovered in my recitativos and arias a mystic sense; while I soon derived from them a solid support:—for I affected to feel much exhausted by the operation, and took special care that the sittings should not be gratuitous.

"Even this, however, could hardly make me amends for the mortification which I constantly experienced, since the consul felt so fearful lest the world might not give his magnetic virtue the credit of my effusions, that to my own face he used to expatiate with every new comer on my intellectual nothingness, until, to avoid this daily disgust, as well as the danger of being detected while at my work, I took the habit of retiring during the greater part of the day to these ruins, where I write undisturbed, and whence I only issue forth in the cool of the evening, at the magnetic hour. I was just going to my task, when, by squatting yourself down over the mouth of my cavern, you kept me entrapped, till, fearing to be late, I made a bold push, which ended in my discovery. But you are too honour-

able to betray one who reposes in you such unbounded confidence.

The poet here stopped, and left me to ruminate. After a few moments of equal silence on both sides, "Cirico," said I, "tell me one thing. I have a *pet* consul as well as yourself. I know the two sages frequently visit. Is signor R—— likewise bitten?"

"He is;" replied the improvvisatore.

"Then Heaven relents!" cried I,—and once more felt hope revive; told Cirico my story, and, having concluded it,—"now," added I, "you must do me a favour. In your comas you must impress my consul—whether in song or in recitativo, no matter!—with the heinousness of keeping other people's children, and the inconvenience which may arise from such proceedings; and if by so doing you get mine restored to his rightful owner, depend upon my eternal gratitude and services." Cirico promised to compose an interlude on purpose; and departed to join his expectant circle:—so did I to return to my lonely lodging.

And more lonely, more sad still was it fated to become: for presently even the transient gleams of happiness reflected upon its walls from the opposite mansion—the occasional glimpses I had of my child—were destined to cease; and this through my own fault too!

It happened the day after the interview with the

poet. As usual my eyes were riveted upon the door of the consular mansion: as usual it began at a certain hour to vibrate, described with provoking slowness a small segment of a circle, and, thus cautiously half opened, at last let out as if by stealth my Alexis and his nurse, to take a little air within its immediate reach: but while the woman settles her new tucker, the little angel—moved by a sudden impulse—slily slips through her negligent fingers, and, feeling himself at liberty, darts forward like an arrow, and in play runs and hides behind my projecting wall. From my own window my eye, plunging right upon him, beheld his sweet face peeping out to enjoy his nurse's search; and down I rushed to embrace my heart's darling:—but already it was too late! Already had the cherub, unwilling to distress his favourite, run back to her arms; and when I came out, he seemed, by the warmth of his caresses, to be craving her pardon.

Could a father witness such endearments, and abstain from claiming his share! Great as was the imprudence of the act, I ran after my child, and in its nurse's own resisting arms imprinted on its lovely face a thousand hurried kisses.

From the moment my person had appeared in sight, the woman had set up such a yell of frantic imprecations as soon brought out into the road all the other too remiss attendants. Immediately they strove to tear the child away from me,—and, fearful

lest the tender babe should suffer in the struggle, I relinquished my hold; but, going home, I pressed, as I went along, my lips on each print of its dear little feet.

From that hour the sight of my darling boy was vouchsafed me no longer. One, two, three whole subsequent days—spent in the most anxious expectation and watching—were slowly brought to their conclusion, without my being able to perceive the least glimpse even of the most inferior of the guardians to whose care my child seemed especially committed: and while in the daytime I was thus disappointed of my former solace, I could as little at night obtain sight of Cirico. As if actuated by some new impulse, he had ceased frequenting his former haunts; he answered not even my unceasing notes of inquiry; and at last it struck me that the traitor, aware how much I had to say to his disadvantage, so far from labouring in my cause, might rather be trying to render it desperate, and to secure to himself a fresh support in other quarters, by contributing to my ruin. From his unaccountable silence as well as disappearance, I concluded that not only he had imparted to my adversaries all my designs, but had assisted them in eluding my vigilance, and conveying my Alexis away. At this idea, which every thing that met my observation only tended to confirm, I no longer felt able to set bounds to my paternal anguish; ran out on the road, into the street, and on

the quay; and wherever I went, denounced the detainers of my child, loaded them with imprecations, and urged the populace to pull down their nefarious abode. Of this sally too I had to pay the penalty.

Mourad, whom my very first feats in Egypt had been secretly hostile to,—Mourad, whom I had since fought openly under Hassan's banners,—Mourad, whose blood my hand had drawn and whose face it had disfigured, now ruled the Bahairé, and consequently was master at Alexandria. How ill I must stand in the favour of this implacable Bey could not fail to be found out to my detriment, by those interested in baffling my exertions and marring my project. They represented me as a spy of the Porte upon the rulers of Egypt, and gave to the real object of my journey the colour of a mere pretence. Accordingly, a few days only after I had seen my Alexis for the last time, I received a formal injunction from the governor of the place, in the name of the authorities of Cairo, to quit the land of the mamlukes within twenty-four hours, under pain of certain forfeiture of life.

At this blow I almost lost my senses. "They triumph then," I cried, "my inhuman oppressors! They part me for ever from the only object capable of throwing a charm over my remaining days! Then why seek to preserve an odious existence: why not take away my child by force, or perish in the attempt! And hereupon I determined, unless my Alexis was

restored to me immediately, to deal death around, and to end with myself,—and, drawing my handjar, sallied forth into the street to execute my purpose.

At the very first turn I met a messenger, sent by Cirico, in search of my lodging. He slipped into my hands a pencil note, only containing these short words, "To the catacombs without delay!"

Without delay I went. I had always, it is true, believed Cirico to be a rogue; but not an ill natured rogue. Though he would most gladly have seen all the crowned heads of Europe ranged like ripe pumpkins in a fruit-stall, I was convinced that he would rather of the two help to keep that of a private friend upon its own shoulders. Already had he been waiting some time, when I reached the place appointed.

"Hush!" cried he in a solemn tone, seeing me move my lips to speak, "waste not uselessly your breath: it may be wanted hereafter. Magnetism,—that mystery which reveals all other mysteries—has informed me of all that you are panting to relate. I might have predicted it; but why announce evils which we cannot prevent!"

"Is this all you have to say?" I exclaimed, disappointed.

"Not all;" answered Cirico. "Your consul has by my magnetic speeches been made to feel compunction for his unjust proceedings: he is certain now your brat will bring him ill luck."

"Then why does he not restore the angel to its parent?"

"Because he is prevented by superior fears."

"Of what?"

"Of the thing to him most awful,—of his termagant wife; whose attraction I always found to be of the negative sort. After my magnetic sleep I took R—— into a corner, and spoke to him broad awake. He then ventured to acknowledge his dread of his rib; and owned he would give the world to see justice done you, provided he had no hand in the doing. In short, you have his leave to recover your child in whatever way you please,—by stratagem or by force."

"Little thanks to any man for that privilege!" cried I;—"such a sort of leave I might have taken without asking it."

"R—— means," rejoined the poet, "that if you should devise a clever method of smuggling the urchin out of his mansion, or even of entering it by storm;—if no measure less daring will do,—he will not stand in the breach to repel you, nor yet struggle very hard to wrest the prize out of your hands."

"But if I fail, I must take all the consequences."

"Just so. He will then enforce in its utmost rigour the decree of the Beys, in order to clear himself to his loving wife from all suspicion of a return to honesty."

I paused a while.—At last,—looking significantly —" Cirico," I cried, " fires are frequent evils in these realms. Tell the consul—the instant he smells the least smoke—to turn without fail his whole gynecæum into the street." And thus having given a hint of my scheme, we discussed the best mode of execution; which being settled,—not without a good deal of argumentation,—we parted for the present: but soon to meet again in a different spot.

CHAPTER XIII.

Beginning with the purpose in which my plan was to end, I first went to the harbour, to see what vessels were ready for sailing. Besides a felucca, brimful of fresh-made hadjees, going to be dropped at the different Barbary ports, I only found a small polacre laden with grain for Ancona, already in the roads, and only waiting the evening land-breeze to set sail. In consideration of the liberal price to be paid for the passage, the captain agreed to weigh anchor the instant I should come on board.

Thus provided on one element, I began to consider how to manage the opposite element on which my scheme depended: but I own I saw much greater difficulty in making an useful ally of fire than of water; and it puzzled me not a little how to raise a flame round the consular mansion, and yet, not to pass for an incendiary. The gynecæum, besides, which I was most anxious to smoke, lay at the back of the house, and stood protected from external approach by a formidable blank wall. To kindle combustibles under its well screened windows, in such a way as to occasion a great fright with little real mischief, might have baffled the skill of an abler engineer. My expedient was to tack

bundles of wool, straw, and other inflammable stuff, by means of wires, to long slender poles.

The hour being arrived which was wont to witness the first concord of consular slumbers, our hostile operations commenced. Part of my myrmidons hid their apparatus and persons near the quarter which I meant to alarm, and there waited my signal, while the remainder, with myself, lay perdu behind a low shed facing the entrance door. The shrill whistle which was to set in motion my machinery was soon sounded, and presently we saw rising in slow majesty, from behind the battlements of the beleaguered building, a thick column of smoke, which not only over-canopied the spreading roof, but circulated in a wavy stream round the various apartments. Loud cries of "fire" hailed its appearance from without: the alarm was given to those within by knocking at all the apertures; and, in a few minutes, it was evident that every soul in the mansion was on foot.

Yet did not a creature venture out. The door on which my eyes were riveted remained as immoveably fast as before, and, while the neighbours began to flock from all quarters to the spot, the inert inmates of the house seemed to make no attempt to escape.

My mind now again misgave me, and suspicions of every sort rushed into my imagination. Perhaps after all Cirico had played me false: perhaps the

consul had found his courage or his cowardice fail him: perhaps my enemies were actually watching to surprise me in the commission of a seemingly heinous crime. Meanwhile minute after minute was elapsing; the night-watch of the Franks would soon go its rounds; nay my combustibles, almost burnt out, threatened to put a speedy end to the siege, even independent of a sally or a rescue,—when no other fate could befall Alexis' miserable father but being driven out of baneful Egypt, and forced to bid his child—his darling child—an everlasting farewell.

In this situation I had already begun to consider whether it might not be better to take myself off at once, than to await the issue of my desperate scheme; when at last the house door—suddenly bursting open with a tremendous crash—poured forth into the street, in one single rapid stream, a far longer string of females than I had fancied the whole mansion could contain.

The consuless herself led the van, enveloped in a loose wrapper. Immediately after came my Alexis, still flushed with rosy sleep and in the arms of his nurse. A set of pale and ghastly attendants, screaming to excite interest, brought up the rear.

No time was to be lost:—while my trusty attendants darted across the way, to break the line of the procession and to insulate the nurse, I sprung forward to snatch away the child;—but already had

my figure caught the eye of his ever watchful guardian. She gave her usual warning whoop, and instinctively all the other women echoed the yell. The concert brought around us all the bystanders who had gradually collected, and who, seeing a tall fellow lay hold of an infant and carry it off, stopped not to inquire his right, but immediately set up after me a loud cry and a general pursuit.

For rendering it ineffectual I relied on my agility, assisted by the deep shadows of the night: but the pursuing troop was too near, and at every step I advanced, its numbers were increased by all those who, running to the fire, met us on the way, and turned back to join the chase. The only thing I could do was to draw my yatagan, and, while with one arm I shielded my babe from the incessant shower of stones, with the other to brandish my weapon, and to beat off the pelting mob. Sometimes, in order to prevent being closed in upon, I was obliged to face about and to make a few passes, calculated to teach those who came too near their proper distance: but in so doing a sharp pebble hit my lovely infant's face, and made the blood gush in streams from his cheek. At this sight I grew desperate; my strength seemed to increase tenfold; and at every stroke of my sabre some miscreant was maimed, or bit the dust.

What power could resist a father fighting for his child! Terror gradually seized all the nearest

rabble: the rest slackened their pace; and a certain space intervened between the pursuers and their intended prey. I was about a dozen yards ahead of the foremost, when the lantern, agreed upon as the signal of the boat, began to glimmer on the shore. I now mustered all my remaining strength, and, with only such few windings as were necessary to throw the blood-hounds off the scent, made for the beacon. Many, tired of the chase, had already given in; and a small portion only of the pack still kept yelping at a distance.

I therefore thought myself safe;—when all at once between me and the goal flashed, like forked lightning, two uplifted sabres, whose wearers had in my windings got before me, and were now waiting to cut off my retreat.

What was to be done?—An instant I stopped and hesitated: but, with a dozen rascals at my heels, and only two in front, I had no choice, and rushed forward. At the critical moment I suddenly waved my hand, and, as if addressing some friends stationed near, cried out "to fire." The expectant pair on this started back, and looked round, while I, seizing my opportunity, darted by them like a thunderbolt. They soon however rallied again, and one actually had his hand on my shoulder, and was at last going to stop my career, when, wheeling half round, I released my person at the expense of his fingers. The low reef now lay before me, under

which was moored the boat, and, having scrambled on the platform, I was going to leap in, when, just at the moment of taking my spring, a loose stone made me slip, and I plunged into the waves between the rock and the barge. My child escaped all injury. Caught by Cirico, who stood on the projecting ledge waiting my arrival, he was handed safe to the sailors; but his father had less luck. The zeal of the boatmen to disentangle me, causing them all to press upon the side of the boat under which I lay wedged, made their collective weight almost crush me to death, and I was only extricated with a couple of ribs broken, my chest miserably bruised, and my loins pierced through by the sharpness of the rocks.

Having fainted the instant I was dragged into the boat, I continued in that state until conveyed on board the ship. There, various applications at last brought me to life again, when I found that we were under weigh, and already far out at sea. Still could my first sensations scarcely be called very pleasant. With consciousness had come pain: my inward bruises now tortured me, and occasioned copious expectorations of blood. As soon, however, as I recovered my speech, I inquired after my child, and he was pointed out to me lying in a little crib, and just lapsed—after a world of woe—into a profound and tranquil sleep. When first put on board, the blood mixed with dust which en-

tirely covered his face, had rendered him a frightful spectacle: but on the unsightly crust being washed off, there only remained a small bruise under his eye of little importance. His chief distresses had been those of his susceptible mind. Torn in the middle of the night from an elegant mansion, a retinue of tender females, and an affectionate nurse, and that, to be the object of a sanguinary contest, to receive a smarting wound, and to be carried on board a miserable vessel, where nothing met his eye but strange and hard-featured sailors, whose very offices of kindness looked more like acts of violence, no wonder that the sensitive child should at first have shrunk with terror from the novel and appalling scene;—and it was only when exhausted with fruitless entreaties and crying, that he fell into the quiet slumber in which, on recovering my senses, I found his mind and body deeply sunk.

Notwithstanding my sufferings and my weakness, when, after so many difficulties and dangers, I thus saw the object of all my hopes and fears at last safe in my possession, I could not be restrained from giving full scope to my raptures, crawled to the crib entrusted with my treasure, and there—afraid to disturb its soft slumbers—knelt and gazed upon it in an ecstacy of joy. Scarcely could I believe so much loveliness to be my own possession, and in my transport—as I was afterwards told—I laughed

and cried in turns, until the whole crew thought me positively crazed. By degrees however I became somewhat more composed; but, as the ferment of my joy abated, my pains put in their claims afresh, till at last—unable any longer to bear an upright posture—I lay down by my babe, awaiting the moment when breaking from his sleep, he should leave me at liberty to press him to my bosom.

Far different from mine, however, were on first awaking my boy's own emotions. The moment he unclosed his eyes, a look of terror overcast his sweet countenance. He stared fearfully around, seemed awhile wholly lost in amazement at things so new and strange, and then, recollecting the change he had experienced, burst into a flood of tears, and loudly called his paramana. In vain I addressed him in the most soothing language,—saying I was his father, and my care for my child should exceed all other care. His only answer was to intreat I would restore him to the friends from whom I had stolen him; and on my stating the impossibility of granting his petition, he loaded me with all the innocent invectives which his gentle heart could suggest. No peace offering of which I could think was accepted, whether addressed to the eye or the palate: all my gifts were spurned,—and only a fast, protracted long beyond the usual period, could for an instant make hunger impose silence on grief.

Reluctantly my Alexis then consented to take some food at my hands;—and this was the first paternal office I ministered to my child.

For several days I myself continued to want the nursing I bestowed. Only while I lay motionless on my back did the pain in my loins become bearable. The smallest exertion renewed all my agonies, and called forth fresh streams of blood from my chest. Insensibly, however, the symptoms of an internal injury became less alarming; the broken ribs seemed to knit again, and the external bruises healed apace: but I remained languid, incapable of enduring the least fatigue, totally bereft of appetite, and seldom visited by refreshing slumbers.

Those of my child were my only cordial. Determined not to be disheartened by his first repulses, which only showed the steadiness of his infant mind, I continued my endearments with unwearied perseverance, until at last I gained his good-will and his confidence. Many, it is true, were the days ere my unceasing solicitude could drive from his memory the constant thoughts of his regretted home; and even after he seemed in general reconciled to the change, he would still at particular hours, and sometimes in the very midst of his mirth and laughter, display a sudden revulsion of features, and break into fresh and poignant paroxysms of grief: but in the yet soft and pliant organs of his infant brain, the impression of things and persons

wholly gone by was gradually effaced, and the later objects which replaced these, stamped on his yet tender sensory their fresher and more recent forms with at least equal force: he accustomed himself to his situation, and recovered his serenity. His anxious mind became susceptible of a new species of uneasiness,—that of losing sight of me; and at last, won over entirely by my love, he transferred to his father all the warm affections of his susceptible heart.

He even gave me more than he had given yet: for to the singularly early developement of his reason and moral feeling his former guardians had not yet begun their appeal, and, by addressing the first these new expanding faculties, I obtained over him a stronger hold, while I paid him a more flattering homage, than he had yet experienced. Mine had been the first consolatory speeches:—it was he now who studied to soothe my sufferings by his care; who unceasingly watched my countenance; amused me with his prattle when I felt in spirits, and lay down in silence by my side, when I looked dejected and sorrowful. How therefore—in the absence of all other feelings, and on the cessation of every other tie—I began to dote on this sole new object of all my thoughts and projects, no words can express. Hour after hour I hung over his cherub face, contemplating as in a mirror that of his lovely and unhappy mother: and many a time, when his

heavenly smile beamed upon me, when his little arms hung round my neck, and when his lips imprinted soft kisses on my cheek, I thought—"Anastasius, Anastasius, what hast thou done to deserve such a blessing? Tremble lest it should prove an honied cup, offered to thy lips by an avenging Providence, only for an instant to be tasted,—then dashed to the ground!"

Our voyage was prosperous enough, until we got into the latitude of Cerigo. There a perverse tramontana seemed to lie in wait with no other object than to shut against us the narrow entrance of the Adriatic. If now and then the wind did come about for a moment, we no sooner began to make a little way than, as if on purpose to mock us, it immediately again shifted back to its old quarter. It afforded a Malthese privateer every convenience for making us bring to; and the ship's papers being deemed somewhat suspicious, and the cargo Turkish property outright, the vessel was compelled to change its course to Maltha, there to undergo legal investigation. That island wanted corn, and the captain himself seemed to have no objection to a shorter voyage and a better market. Useless, under such circumstances, would have been the opposition of a passenger. What is he by the side of the cargo—by that of a single bale of goods? and I comforted myself with the thought that I should sooner be on land, and more speedily obtain medical advice.

A lazaretto is a sort of purgatory, intervening between the regions of infidelity and the realms of true belief; and quarantine may be termed an ordeal through which all must pass, who, coming from the one, seek admittance into the other. Arrived in my place of temporary confinement at Maltha, I employed the period required to prove my freedom from one species of disease, in taking remedies for another, less violent—but, alas! more tenacious. The inward soreness continued unabated, spite of all the emollients and drugs, liberally supplied from the medicine chest of a traveller who had been penned up, on his return from a voyage to the Levant, about the same time with myself.

Designing, I suppose, to write a book, signor Lauri (that was the gentleman's name) seemed as anxious to settle his estimate of the nations which he had just quitted, as I felt desirous of forming an opinion of those whose precincts I was on the point of entering:—whence our conversation turned chiefly upon the difference between the natives of the East and those of the West. The predestinarian principles of the former found in my friend a doughty opponent: "What"—used he to exclaim, sagaciously knitting his brow—"can be at once more absurd in theory, and more prejudicial in practice—more destructive of all prudence, and more inimical to all exertion—than to maintain that whatever be the nature of intervening occurrences,

certain peculiar leading events widely distant from each other—such as the choice of a wife, the birth of a child, the accession to an estate, the hour of death, and our state in the life hereafter—must still take the same course? It is totally denying all connexion between cause and effect."

"You are right," I answered.—"That connexion appears to preserve, from the very first origin of things unto their last perceptible developement, a continuity so entire, so unbroken, that, instead of this partial, disjointed, incomplete predestination, only existing by halves, only ruling a few detached incidents of our lives, only presenting insulated phenomena, arising from no previous cause and producing no subsequent effects, we can admit nothing short of an universal preordination, embracing alike every minutest occurrence and every most important event of our existence."

Here my friend's disturbance increased: he asked me what was to become, with such an universal preordination, of our free-agency, our free-will?

"Whatever can or may;" was my answer. "Even he who should think himself possessed of free-agency in its utmost fulness, from his hand being ever left to execute uncontrolled every wildest wish of his mind, (and how few there are that labour under so dire a misfortune!) is still not a free-agent in the smallest degree, since the will from which his actions proceed is not free."

"The will itself not free!"—cried Lauri, quite aghast;—"and that, even where, instead of being the immediate result of some headlong over-ruling passion, it should be the slow and deliberate offspring of the longest suspense, and the most mature consideration?"

"Not even then," I resumed. "The first desire of modifying the will according to such mature consideration, of submitting it to such protracted suspense, (conditions witnessed but seldom!) can only have arisen from such a mass of knowledge unintentionally acquired, and such a concurrence of impressions unintentionally experienced, as must render the later results more obviously than ever the effect only of circumstances wholly incompatible with the inherent freedom of that will."

"Then let us at least," cried Lauri in complete despair, "—thus tied hands and feet—derive from our indestructible fetters another species of comfort: let us no longer struggle to obtain what we may wish for; but lie still, and suffer ourselves to be quietly swept down the stream of our uncontrollable destiny. Our efforts to mend it must be all in vain."

"And are you then so blind," replied I rather bluntly, "as not to perceive that whatever faculty of commanding future events we lose by a partial and disjointed predestination—according to which, as certain occurrences happen without previous regular causes, others must remain unproductive of regular

consequences—is more than restored to us by a preordination so universal, that nothing can arise except from an uninterrupted series of prior modifications; that, consequently, when we employ the means uniformly appropriated by Providence to peculiar ends, we have no failure to fear except from the opposition of other modifications, as yet unknown perhaps, but equally subjected by that Providence to definite rules; and finally, that, though our will and our knowledge must ever proceed from some of the prior phenomena of that preordination, that very knowledge and will may themselves in their turn produce some of its later yet undeveloped ramifications? Name a single instance of the power in man to command, to calculate, to foresee future events, founded on his experience of past occurrences, which can originate in any thing but the necessary preordained connexion between them."

"Still,"—muttered Lauri,—"whatever left our will invariably depending on our knowledge, and our knowledge on extraneous circumstances, must annihilate our claim to eternal rewards, and our liability to everlasting punishments."

"Why then," was my reply, "let us give up altogether those sufferings without end, which, of use neither to deter nor to correct, seem after all little reconcileable with the justice or the goodness of a Creator, who, having made his creatures

fallible, would hardly, at any period of time, shut the gates of mercy for ever against the repentant sinner. Indeed, it may be questioned, in my opinion, whether even a penal retribution limited in its duration is—logically speaking—consistent with the relation between a creature in a retrospective view entirely passive, and his omnipotent Creator; or admissible otherwise than between man and man."

"Take away the legality of punishments,"—cried Lauri with a victorious smile,—"and you take away the existence of deserts!"

"To insist on the smallest deserts with respect to his Maker," I answered, "seems to me in man the height of presumption. Man had no right to be born: he owes his existence, his very virtues to the bounty of his Creator, and to that bounty I am content to owe all my happiness, here and hereafter, even if I were to be raised to the perfections of an angel:—and as to punishments, or, in other words, sufferings not arising immediately from the nature of the deeds, or from the desire of producing amendment in the author—I myself, wretched creature, prone to passion, and often inflamed by an irresistible thirst for vengeance as I am, could I inflict chastisement on my own sweet babe, and for faults for which I scarce can blame him, otherwise than in order to render him ultimately both better and happier!"

"Adieu, then," resumed Lauri piteously, "if not to all motives for exertion, at least to all exertions in the cause of virtue! Your preordination, and the utter absence of accountability it implies, cannot fail to afford to those that desire it a free licence for every vice!"

"A licence so injurious, so deprecable," I observed, "could only derive from a doctrine—if such there be—which should destroy the natural, the inherent, the eternal connexion between good deeds and happiness; and should admit a chance of obtaining bliss eternal, without renouncing evil.

"But mine,"—added I,—"is not such a doctrine. However much preordination may seem to cancel man's accountability, and to take from his sufferings the character of direct punishment, it is not the less true (and too well I feel it!) that, according to that very preordination, misery is on this side of the grave or on the other the unavoidable consequence of evil, and real permanent happiness only attainable through corresponding goodness;—and is so the more, from the very strictness of that preordination."

"But what boots," Lauri asked, "even a preordination thus directed, without that free-agency, that free-will, which alone can enable us to turn its laws to our advantage?"

"As soon," was my answer, "as the knowledge of an indispensable connexion between virtue and

happiness reaches our hearts, our will must, from its very want of freedom, its very subservience to our knowledge, become unavoidably abhorrent from evil; and until a knowledge of such a connexion is attained, the utmost freedom of will could still not induce a preference for good. Whoever therefore has —no matter how—himself attained that knowledge, will rather endeavour to lead others, through its diffusion and empire over their will, irresistibly to good, than risk tempting them, by insisting on the freedom of their volition, to try its independence in resisting virtue's voice;—and since I have (not without paying dearly for it) at last obtained a glimpse of this valuable knowledge, with you, my Alexis!" added I, embracing my child, "let me begin the pleasing task of rendering it fruitful!"

For the sake of this darling child, I gave up a project, to the performance of which I had long pertinaciously clung:—it was that of making a solemn and public abjuration of Islamism. This scheme, it is true, had already been forcibly combated by Caridi, the chief promoter of my voyage to Trieste. "Why," used he to say, "make your return to the faith of your fathers, which in reality can only be an act of the mind, a spectacle for the multitude? It is a thing more likely to scandalise than to edify; to remind people that the church suffered an infidelity, than that it has recovered a stray sheep:"—but, though my reason gave assent to the remark,

my heart still recoiled from the counsel. I always seemed to be composed of two wholly distinct persons: the one argumentative, sophistical; the other entirely under the influence of my imagination: and these different beings never became sufficiently amalgamated into one single uninterrupted identity. Now, of these two persons the latter was the one which exerted most sway on this occasion. I felt as if wanting all the outward show of penitence, all the external demonstration of sorrow, effectually to atone for my errors and to hush my remorse. To lie in the dead of the night, on the cold pavement of the church, before the cross of our Saviour or the shrine of my patron saint; to wash the steps of the sanctuary with my tears, or to make its walls re-echo with my moanings, seemed to be that which could alone restore to my mind its composure, and to my heart its tranquillity:—but my Alexis had attained that age at which the spectacle of my penance must convey to him the suspicion of my shame—the knowledge of my guilt;—and what tender parent can give up the esteem of his child! Nay, even if the acknowledgments of my transgressions were not to lower me in his estimation, the memory of my debasement might lower his own value in the eyes of the world. Whatever conditions, therefore, my more scrupulous cousin might exact from me at a later period, on my arrival at Trieste, I determined for the present only to slide back into the bosom of the church

unperceived, and to avail myself of the high walls and deep solitude of my prison, to resume in silence the solemn rites of my ancestors, and the old, often regretted, and truly Christian name of Anastasius, given me by my parents.

Determined to shake off as much as possible all that marked the native of the East, and to adopt all that might assist me to assimilate with the children of the West, I proceeded from the inward to the outward man; but, though my person was no longer, as erst, the sole idol of my heart, I yet continued sufficiently impressed with the advantage of good looks, to feel a very different sensation on quitting the Osmanlee attire from that which I had experienced on doffing the santon's rags. It seemed to me a sort of degradation to exchange the rich and graceful garb of the East, which either shows the limbs as nature moulded them, or makes amends for their concealment by ample and majestic drapery, for a dress which confines without covering, disfigures without protecting, gives the gravest man the air of a mountebank, and, from the uncouth shape of the shreds sowed together to compose it, only looks like the invention of penury for the use of beggars;—and when I came to mutilating my very person, to cutting into the quick of my growth; —when, without being able to give my face a feminine softness, I was only going to deprive it of the signs of manhood; to sever from my lips my

long cherished mustachios, I own it required all the philosophical reflections which I could muster up on the nothingness of a few hairs, to persuade me to lay the fearful steel to their roots.

But what was the difficulty of changing the outward trappings of the body, to that of dismissing the habits rooted in the inmost recesses of the mind? what was that of adopting the dress which the tailor could model, to that of assuming manners which must be the result of the nicest observation, and the longest practice? In the East each different age, and nation, and rank, and profession, however closely intermixed with the others, still retains its peculiar garb and formulas, its stated place and boundaries, as distinctly marked as they are immutably fixed. In the East centuries succeed centuries, new generations tread on the remains of generations gone before, them, and empires themselves are founded and are destroyed, without the limits that circumscribe the different races of men and orders of society being confounded or transgressed. In the East nothing in point of forms, of address, and of manners is indefinite, or arbitrary, or mutable, or left to the impulse of the moment or the taste of the individual. In the East, therefore, it is easy to learn by rote the unchangeable exigencies of society; and every individual, whatever situation he may obtain —whether from a slave he become a master, from a civilian a soldier, or from a subject a sovereign—

immediately knows how to fit himself to his new place, and how to act his new part, void of embarrassment, or awkwardness, or even vulgarity.

Far different appeared the system of the West! There, on the contrary, whatever the eye could view or the mind comprehend—from the most fundamental organization of states to the most superficial gloss of social intercourse—seemed unfixed, discretional, subject to constant revolution, and, like the coat of the cameleon, borrowing a different hue from every passing cloud. There each different sex, age, nation, rank, and profession, instead of the strongly marked eastern distinctness of outlines, on all sides only showed blending shades, evanescent forms, prominences rubbed away, and features confounded—tones, looks, and language, varied only by gradations so imperceptible, by shades so delicate, that a long study alone could disclose the theory, and long habit alone teach the performance of their ultimate refinements. There the prejudices of the individual, constantly at variance with the laws of the land, and the duties imposed by religion, uniformly clashing with the latitude required by custom, were each to be in turns distinguished and yet blended, obeyed and yet disregarded, without the act appearing an effort, or the effect producing a discordance; nay, there the mind, always kept on the stretch, was not even allowed to unbend in repose after business was ended;

but must still, in the hours of leisure—not hours of relaxation—encounter the new toil of constantly supplying matter for discourse, suited at once to the peculiar character of the speaker, and to those of the diversified listeners.

Yet did it now become my task—alone, untutored and uncounselled—to embody with my original substance, ideas and habits, these intangible new forms and these indefinable new shades, which many of the natives themselves but awkwardly wear,—and that at an age too when the cast of my own character was stiffened into irremediable permanence by the cold hand of time—on pain of exciting the sneers of the cold, fastidious, unsympathizing spectators of the new stage which I was going, uncheered and unsupported, to tread.—Arduous was the undertaking; small the hope of success!

In fact, whether from the loss of health and the prostration of spirits, under which I had laboured ever since the last fatal pressure of my feet on the shores of the East, or whether from the more appalling form assumed by the new objects before me as I advanced further westward, I every day began to contemplate with increasing awe the idea of encountering a new world with which I had nothing in common. Every day that new world presented itself to my imagination more as a gloomy desert, to me without interest, without friends, and without

happiness. The people of Europe seemed heartless, the virtues of the Franks frigid, the very crimes of the West dull and prosaïc; and I was like a plant which, reared in all the warmth of a hothouse, is going all at once to be launched into all the inclemency of an atmosphere, ripe with chilling blasts and nipping frosts.

Far therefore from waiting with impatience for the period which was to dismiss me from the narrow cell of my quarantine into the unlimited space of this new scene, I could not help looking forward to the awful moment with trepidation. As long as I remained within the pale of the establishment devoted to purification from my eastern stains, I felt as if only standing on the extremest verge of my native realms; as if not yet entirely removed from all contact with the parental soil, and not yet entirely beyond the influence of the paternal atmosphere; as if still able to fall back at will upon the fostering bosom on which I had been reared, and to regain by a timely retreat all my native rights and privileges:—but the threshold of the Lazaretto once crossed; the barred doors of the quarantine yard once closed behind me, it seemed as if a barrier deep as the centre of the earth, high as the heavenly vault, was to rise between the scenes of my youth and the remainder of my dreary existence; as if nothing that had been could preserve the least connexion with what was still to be.

When therefore the hour of my liberation struck; when I was bidden to walk forth,—ready to take my flight, and, like the bird driven from its downy nest, to plunge into boundless space—I shrunk back, and for a few moments still doubted whether I should not after all forego my rash design, and, instead of walking forth among strangers, rather stay, and seek the first vessel in which I might return to the genial shores of the East.

But one great, one mighty thought superseded all others, and determined me to proceed. It was not for myself I went,—it was for my child: it was to perfect his education, to secure his future welfare, to render him in all respects a man different from his father. This idea gave resolution to my wavering mind. I saw my luggage removed, took my Alexis by the hand, and hastily walked out.

Yet when—arrived in the midst of the space that separates the precincts of the lazaretto from the remainder of the Malthese territory—I heard the fatal gates, only opened to let me out, again close with hollow clang, the awful sound went through my inmost marrow; my heart seemed to sink within me, and, turning round, for the last time to contemplate the porch whence I had reluctantly gone forth, I could not help once more bidding all I left farewell. "Glorious sun of the East!" cried I with faltering tongue, "balmy breath of the Levant! warm affections of my beloved Greece,—adieu for

ever! The season of flowers is gone by: that of storms and whirlwinds howls before me. Among the frosts of the North I must seek my future fortunes: a cradle of ice must rock my future hopes. For the bleak wastes and black firs of Gothic climes I am going to exchange the myrtle groves of Grecian valleys; and, perhaps, on the further borders of the chilly Neva, it may be my fate to cherish the last remembrance of Ionia and of Chios!"

Thus saying, I took my cherub in my arms, pressed him against my panting bosom, inclined my face against his downy cheek—and went on.

CHAPTER XIV.

Anxious to gain the place of my destination, I hired a speronara to convey me to Sicily. As I passed under the galleys in Valetta harbour, and contemplated the batteries bristling on its shore: "See," said to me one of my boatmen, "those engines of war, employed to diffuse a religion of peace, by men who take the vows of priests, and lead the lives of soldiers. One would suppose man short-lived and perishable enough by nature, to have no need of so many contrivances of art still to abridge his brief existence, and *that*, not piecemeal, but wholesale: but so it is notwithstanding; and you who come from Turkey, may perhaps smile to find in Christendom the trade of inflicting death a favourite livelihood!"

Etna fumed as I passed by: Charybdis shook, and Scylla growled: yet did I land unimpeded at Messina, and there soon re-embarked straight for Naples.

The inhabitants of this capital built upon a volcano seemed to me completely gone out of their senses. From the lowest lazzarone up to their fishing, fowling, lazzaroni king, they were all rejoicing

in a peace just concluded with revolutionary France, as madly as if war could thenceforth be no more. I carried letters from Maltha to two personages of the *nobiltà*, a gentleman and a lady; and had the extreme satisfaction of finding myself recommended by singular good luck to the two people in all Naples who bore to each other the most inveterate enmity. M. de Silva was a wit; and, in order to ensure my success in society, took particular pains to warn me against the least attempt at consistency in my behaviour. "Like our bodies," he observed, "our minds,—and consequently our opinions and our feelings,—must necessarily change every day; and he who, for the sake of that chimera consistency, is determined ever to adhere to what in some luckless moment he uttered, must sooner or later renounce all pretensions to truth."—To Silva's honour be it spoken; the doctrine which he preached he likewise practised.

Me. de B—, being no wit, contended on the contrary the more strenuously for that consistency, which Silva regarded as the mark of a servile spirit. It had not prevented her—it is true—from changing her lovers very frequently: but that she accounted for. Finding her speak philosophically of her own proceedings, I begged of her one day to explain to me how, with so much freedom of manner, she had contrived to incur so little censure? "By leaving my reputation," answered she, "as all

good christians should, entirely to Providence; showing others the indulgence I wanted for myself; and not imagining that I could whitewash my own conduct, by blackening that of others." This was not wit, assuredly, nor even a happy choice of metaphor; but, to my mind, a sound, well-wearing sentiment.

Wishing to cultivate both my friends with equal freedom, I took it into my head to patch up a peace between them. This treaty presented greater difficulties than had done that with France: for while Silva maintained that many things might be better, and was even supposed secretly to work at their improvement, Me. de B— was for leaving every thing —her complexion excepted—as she found it. "Were we to live for ever on this globe," she used to say, "there would be ample time for every experiment, political as well as other:—but as matters stand, how are those to be indemnified, who lose their lives in the process before the end is obtained? What can posterity do for them, that they should be happy to die for posterity?"

Upon the principle of not doing too much for posterity, Me. de B— persevered in her *eloignement* from Silva; who, in revenge, undertook to estrange me from her parties; and for this purpose proposed to take me to a dinner of certain literary friends,— "with whom," he added, "it was absolutely necessary that I should be acquainted."

I always bowed to necessity, which on this occa-

sion, however, seemed synonymous with impossibility: for what chance had a stranger of slipping in a word, or of obtaining an answer, with men who had all rehearsed their parts beforehand? Accordingly I hardly opened my lips; but Silva, who fancied he had shone, returned home in raptures with his day. "Had you sufficient quickness," cried he,—"barbarian as you are—to observe the incessant circulation of the most ethereal wit? How at first a few light sparks began to flash at random from different points of the electric circle; each in turns eliciting fresh scintillations from the opposite quarter, until at last the whole table fired up into one single uninterrupted blaze of the most brilliant eloquence, repartee, and bon mot. What preparation, what vigilance, what readiness such conversation requires! What triumphs and what mortifications it causes!—Depend upon it, the repose of half the party has been disturbed for a fortnight, by the good things the other half said this evening."

"Charming effects," cried I, "of a convivial meeting!"

"And yet," resumed Silva, "you have not seen the genius of the party: he likes to make himself in request. To-morrow we go and rouse him in his own den!"

A part of this den consisted of a handsome library, into which visitors were shown, while the genius of the place prepared for his impromptu effusions. The levee had already begun. Three or four per-

sonages occupied the farthest recess of the room. One was humming a bravura air, as he walked backwards and forwards, another accompanying it with the steps and attitudes of a *pas seul*, a third poring upon a huge folio of prints, and the fourth, the moment we walked in, turned from us so abruptly to admire a festooned bell-rope, that I never saw his face.

My own attention was wholly engaged by the books. Those I had seen at Pera seemed to me a school-boy's bundle compared with this abyss of knowledge. Besides the shelves against the wall, absolutely bending under the weight of authors already marshalled in regular battle array against every denomination of ignorance,—some heavy armed, others as light troops, others again as voltigeurs belonging to no division in particular, but hovering in turns over the outskirts of each, the very floor was covered with piles of still unsorted science, lying strewed about in a confused heap. I was amazed at the sight. "How many square feet of reading," cried I, "are here collected in one single apartment! How many ideas, good, bad, indifferent, true, erroneous and contradictory are jumbled together—some lying, some standing, some on end, and some, I apprehend, head over heels:—and will my poor Alexis have to cram all this lumber into his youthful brain, ere he can pass among Franks for a man of understanding!"

"If he did," replied Silva, "I am afraid he

would scarcely have a spare corner left for his own ideas: but the thing is wholly out of the question. Formerly no dust equalled that of books for blinding people's eyes; modern wits wipe it clean away:— they write indeed, but only from inspiration. Even philosophers have ceased to prize knowledge the more for being at second-hand. Men of talent now buy libraries only to shrug up their shoulders and say "they never read!"

A clatter of doors, and a shuffle of slippers, now announced the approach of the genius. He appeared with locks dishevelled, and a wild stare—intended for a look of inspiration; ran up to us in an ecstacy; embraced Silva, then me; then asked who I was; then congratulated himself upon beholding a Greek, and me upon beholding him; then dragged us by main force into what he called his sanctum; then told us the quartetto we had left in his anteroom consisted of a poet, a scene-painter, a musical composer, and a ballet-master, all waiting his directions for the new forthcoming opera; then complained of the endless labours which his taste entailed upon him; then showed us the list of the virtuosi and virtuose he patronised; then ran out as if bitten by the tarantula, to fix in writing a sudden thought; then came in again making a thousand apologies; then informed us that Horace had no energy and Virgil no pathos; then recited an ode, three sonnets, and half the first canto of an epic poem of his own composing; then stopped to receive our applause,

and to contemplate his person in the looking-glass; then took a few lozenges to ease his chest; then asked me whether I did not infinitely prefer the misty sublime—that of Ossian—to that of Homer; then threw out a witticism or two, which he laughed at most heartily, and we also out of complaisance; then entreated to see me every day—except six of the week, and the forenoon of the seventh, on which he was engaged; then made an appointment with us at the masked ball at San Carlo, and then dismissed us, to return to the sons of Apollo whom he had left in his library.

Forced to join the party to the masquerade, I found but little pleasure in this to me novel entertainment. At first indeed the sight dazzled, but it soon tired, and at last annoyed me. I could not get rid of a soothsayer, who had singled me out as the object of his pursuit. Succeeding at last to take hold of my arm, and putting his mouth to my ear: "You think this form a borrowed one," he whispered,—"undeceive yourself. People put on masks to exhibit their characters undisguised. I see in reality all that is hidden from others."

"Then who is it you are speaking to?" was my first question.

"A stranger:" the answer.

"Doubtless! but from what country?"

"One to which you have sworn not to return."

"My name?"

"A Christian badge cast away among the Turks."

"You have seen me unmasked."

"For that I must have seen you undressed:—your present ordinary garb is itself but a mask assumed very recently; and I know that which lies deeper than even your inmost garment."

"What?"

"An ass's skin!"

Here I began to wax wroth. "How so! are you ashamed of a friend's last remembrance? Do your Spiridion's tablets begin to lie heavy on your bosom?"—was the query occasioned by my anger.

At these words my surprise increased. The sacred memento was indeed composed of the substance which bears the vulgar name by which it was specified: but to no mortal in Christendom had I yet imparted its existence:—"Who can you be?" cried I, more eagerly than before.

"*That* I came not here to tell: but to-morrow night at the same hour meet me here again; and when you see me retire, dare to follow me."

I promised, and came:—we withdrew together; and, after going the length of three or four streets, the wizard entered a mean-looking house, where I was ushered by him into a room dimly lighted, up four pair of stairs.

Here my entertainer unmasked, and to my surprise showed features of which I had not the smallest remembrance. Still it was something to see a real face of any sort in so suspicious a place.

"Now tell me"—said I . . . .

ATI MAHAL

"Questions," interrupted the stranger, "are here only answered by the dead: evoke whom you please."

In faltering accents I named Euphrosyne. The wizard shook his head. Then Helena:—he frowned.—Anagnosti then! "What demon," he now cried, "makes you enumerate all those whom you have injured?"

"You cannot raise spirits," answered I sneeringly.

"Ere you judge, name some being you have served," replied the wizard:—"Cirico for instance."

"Cirico is alive."

"He is dead: last night, at Alexandria, he fell into a coma, and never woke again."

"Then be it Cirico:"—and Cirico appeared.

The poet so evidently showed as much of flesh and blood as had ever entered into his spare composition, that I ran to embrace him: but I grasped only unsubstantial air! Startled at the circumstance, I stepped back:—again the spectre advanced, and probably by this time I looked a little scared; for on the phantom opening its mouth to begin a solemn speech, it fixed its eyes upon me, and burst out into a loud peal of laughter.

"Where ghosts laugh," cried I, "there needs must be a joke:" and I again sprang forward. Again the figure vanished; but, now no longer

dismayed, I rushed on, overset every thing in my way, and groped about until I hauled forth from behind a table the real Cirico, whose image only I had thus far seen, reflected by some optical contrivance.

"And so I catch you again," I cried; "and at your old tricks too!"

"You do," was the poet's reply, "but no longer unwillingly: however,—as this is but an uncomfortable place,—we shall leave my Gaëtano to settle matters here, and adjourn to a coffeehouse, where I will tell you all."

Seated in the *bottega*, over our *rinfreschi*: "when you quitted Egypt,"—began the improvvisatore,—"I had just killed the last princess of my tragedy, and secured the last sequin of my patron. It therefore became expedient to return to Italy,—were it only to claim that diamond on your finger there, which you promised me for my services, but, in your fainting fit on the beach at Alexandria, forgot to bestow. A plausible pretence for leaving the Consul was the least of my difficulties. I asserted that the operas which I had spouted were mine: he claimed them as his: we quarrelled, and we parted. I soon found a passage straight for this place, and in this place a patron in that transcendent genius under whose roof . . . . ."

"I yesterday"—cried I, finishing the sentence—

"met you, afraid of being recognised, and in company with a dancer, a fiddler, and a scene-shifter. But take your promised stone, and . . . . ."

"Receive in return an unpromised billet-doux,"—resumed Cirico, handing me a letter, of which the very form and superscription bespoke a female writer.

"What," exclaimed I; "Apollo turned Mercury!"—But my suspicions for once did the poet injustice. The letter was dated from Alexandria, and the signature, that of the consuless, my defeated adversary.

"You know,"—she wrote, after some insignificant preamble,—"how at Smyrna I found in a miserable hovel an infant unblessed by a parent's care. Both nurse and child were pining for want; both revived under my roof: but soon the affections of the servant wandered from her charge to a young taooshan, while mine centred more every day in the lovely boy. Seeing him hourly grow in all that is excellent, I became so wrapped up in the feelings and duties of a mother as to forget that there still existed a father—when in an evil hour you appeared!

"Parental rights over the offspring of unwedded love are unacknowledged in law, and by you could not even be maintained in equity. Your child must have perished but for the care of strangers: and, after strangers alone had cultivated its young mind, as well as supplied all its wants,—had alone rescued it

from ignorance and from vice, as well as from misery and death,—it belonged not to you to reap what you had not sowed. To have yielded up into your unhallowed hands the angel, whose keen sensibilities I had pledged myself, by the very pains bestowed upon their cultivation, never to expose to the risk of being wounded; to have tamely suffered that angel to pass,—as it was likely to do under your guidance—not only from consequence to contempt, and from care to neglect, but from purity to corruption, and from happiness to misery, I must have been bereft of common humanity: and, had you possessed the feelings of a father, you yourself must have wished the tried and tender guardian of your offspring to have ever remained, as she was become, its mother.

"You did not: you recovered your boy, and rendered me anew childless. Yet such is the love I still bear your Alexis, that for his sake I even humble myself before you, and stoop to prefer a prayer to him whom otherwise I must have cursed;—and it is this: that you will duly weigh in your mind the situation and prospects of which your rashness has robbed your child, by wresting him from my arms; and that you will thence deduce how heavy is become in his behalf your own responsibility, and how much it behoves you to do, in order to make him amends for all he has lost. Perform this with pious intentness; be as tender

a father in your more mature age, as you have been a thoughtless one in the giddiness of youth; and you may still at her last hour obtain the blessings of the once happy ATHENAIS."

This letter leaving me little in a mood to enjoy Cirico's humour, I went home immediately, and over the very pillow of my child, already hushed in sweet repose, vowed rigidly to perform its contents. Many years before, I had received a similar appeal to my parental feelings, in behalf of another ill-starred offspring by another hapless mother, like Euphrosyne deserted and dead. The two epistles seemed intended for companions. "If I live," thought I, "they shall be hung up in my chamber, be ever under my eyes,—and, by deserving the blessings promised in the one, I may perhaps still avert the curses threatened in the other!"

Meanwhile I determined to hasten to my destination: for so far from the pharmacopœia of Italy re-establishing my Greek constitution, I had fresh and frequent returns of aggravated illness, and felt anxious at least to leave my boy an orphan only among such as were able to supply a father's care. On mentioning to Silva my intention of quitting Naples: "Good!" said he, "I too want to change its air, in order to absent myself from a lady who has made love to me so long, that she now persuades herself it was I who made love to her, and resents

her own mistake as my infidelity. We will travel together."

And so we did. For the first time in my life I journeyed in a square box on wheels: the two masters sitting face to face with their two servants; while my little Alexis, the most delighted and amusing of the party, placed in the middle, looked like a gem surrounded by its inferior accompaniments.

As I approached the ancient mistress of the world, the eternal city, the destroyer of Greece, my heart beat high. But, alas! if he who names Rome names energy, names strength, he who beholds what remains of so much greatness, beholds nothing but imbecility and impotence:—he beholds the prostrate carcass of a giant, and foul corruption devouring its remains. Sheep graze round the altar where captive monarchs were slaughtered in honour of Jove the great and the good, and silence reigns in that arena where eighty thousand tongues at once applauded the wretch, expiring in real torture to represent some ancient fable. The very monuments of a more recent date only arise, like fresher weeds, out of the ashes of former decay:—they are only the fungus, starting forth from the creviced base of some nobler pile, and which, by feeding on that fabric's costly substance, achieves its destruction.

Silva seemed to enjoy my disappointment; satire was his profession. "These people," said he, "cannot prevent the sun of their fine climate from shining at its stated hours; but they make their streets impervious to its cheering light:—a deep gloom meets the eye wherever towers man's abode. They cannot prohibit the rich vegetation of their fertile soil from diffusing its fragrance; but they collect every villanous odour to subdue nature's sweets:—even amid their very orange groves loss of scent would be a gain! They cannot cancel the spring's ancient privilege of enamelling with flowers the swelling hill and dimpled valley; but they tarry in their fetid town till the magic has vanished, and autumn embrowns both the garden and the grove:—no one thinks of country rambles till summer is gone by. They cannot stop the crystal rills, while bubbling up in the mountain; but they suffer the captive stream to ooze out of the aqueduct, and to infuse pestilence into the marshy plain. They cannot dive into the inmost recesses of the human brain, there to nip in its very first germs every brightest faculty; but, conducting the developments of the human reason as the Chinese do those of their peach and plum trees, they encompass each tender shoot of the intellect with so many minute fetters, religious, political and social, that dwarfs are produced where giants were intended. Their manu-

scripts are not suffered to be inspected; their pictures are left to rot; their very city has been allowed to slip from its seven hills into the sink between. They clip their trees into men, and their men into singers. In their vaunted last Judgment heaven appears far more dismal than hell. Their law deems infamous not the thief, but the magistrate—the bargello. Their tribunals sell justice to the highest bidder; their churches screen the criminal; and the huge temple on which we now stand" (for from St. Peter's proud dome went forth this bitter diatribe)—" built at the expense of the whole Roman world, on a foundation which stands awry, and with a cupola which yawns with rents,—contains absolutions for every sin, as well as confessionals appropriated to every language. The seclusion of the convent is the school of the sovereign; the renouncement of the world the preliminary to ruling the state, and the decrepitude of old age the chief recommendation in the candidate for the supreme power. Vigor to hold the reins of empire is a motive for exclusion from the pontifical throne: those who aspire to govern, must renounce connubial bliss; and all chance of a lawful lineage must be foregone, ere those honours are attainable, which man elsewhere seeks chiefly for the sake of his offspring. Hence nephews step into the place of sons; and the very policy of the statesman be-

comes doubly crooked, from the oblique direction given to his affections. The word virtue indeed exists in the language, but is applied to skill in singing; and as to valour, the former signification of the same word, it is a quality which during so many ages has been let out for hire, first in the gross by the condottiere, and next more in detail by the professed bravo, that those disclaim it who value their character, and cowardice, under the name of caution, forms not only the privilege of the priest, but the pride of the cavalier. Visit a friend in the daytime, and he surveys you through a grated hole in his entrance door, ere he dares to let you in: venture out at night, and from a distance you are bidden to avert your eyes, lest one murder witnessed should necessitate a second. The very head of the church, when in the holy of the holies, dares not take the consecrated wine except through a gilded reed, lest his lips should suck in poison; and in the heart of his capital the pontiff of Rome keeps in his pay, for the safety of his person, the rude mountaineer of Swisserland, as your Turkish pasha does the barbarian from Epirus and from Coordestan. Thank God! however, this mass of imbecility and vice hies fast to its fate: for if by a late submission which the Romans call a treaty, the rotten grant of St. Peter's rich domain is yet saved a while from utter ruin, its seals are all torn off, and its orna-

ments effaced[2]. Nature herself conspires with man in the work of just destruction. In that sky so transparent lurks a permanent poison, which, formerly only creeping like the adder along the hollow valley, now soars like the eagle above the steepest hill, and invades the last abodes once safe from its intrusion. Thus shall soon the world's ancient mistress again return to nought; and as the herdsman erst wandered in solitude where Rome in later days arose, so shall the herdsman again wander in solitude where Rome has ceased to be."

Silva here ending his effusion, we again began to descend the thousand and one steps which we had, to my great fatigue, ascended. In the midst of our downward progress my companion abruptly stopped short, as if struck with a sudden thought. "So near the abode of your ancient Gods," he cried, "they might feel offended if we did not pay them a farewell visit, previous to their forced departure for the banks of the Seine. This is their second grand removal since the days of Praxiteles. —Let us go to the Vatican, and see them packing up."

Already tired, and somewhat peevish with increasing weakness: "Am I not sick enough"—cried I,—"of real man, that I must run after his image in stone and brass?" but Silva overruled my ineffectual resistance. When indeed I beheld what

were called the Apollo, the Mercury, the Jupiter, the Venus, and the other gods and goddesses of my forefathers, I cannot deny that I felt pleasure. "And can these fair forms"—thought I to myself—"have been the production of demons and of witchcraft? Can it be Satan that smiles on those lovely lips? If so, ah! who could withstand his wiles?"—and with one deep sigh my heart absolved all paganism. I almost wished to have lived in those ages and amid that worship whose wrecks still looked so attractive; and I repined at the gloom of a religion whose temples, adorned like charnel-houses, display even in the freshness of the finest marbles, the features of death and the forms of corruption.

Scarcely had we reached our lodging when Silva was called upon by a friend, who advised him to leave Rome immediately, lest he should be entombed alive in the mausoleum which emperor Adrian only destined for his repose after death.

"What have I done," cried Silva, astonished, "to be thus treated to the honours of a state criminal?—Assassination, blasphemy, profanation would have been overlooked in this indulgent place: but can I have said that the Pope starved his subjects to enrich his nephew Braschi, or that the nephew sold the state to buy the Pontine marshes?—can I have maintained that prince

Borghese's gems were modern, or princess Lanti's charms antique?—In fine, can I have admired Pasquino's wit, or abused Pius's leg?"

"You once returned a bow from the arch-fiend Cagliostro," answered the friend;—"and asserted that free-masonry and treason were not always synonymous."

"If so," exclaimed Silva, "let us depart this instant! From real offences I might, at Rome at least, have escaped. With imaginary crimes there is no contending."

Accordingly we set off the same evening, in the very teeth of the still white and threatening Apennines. I left a hundred plans unexecuted and performances unfinished, connected with my Alexis; but I thought myself bound in honour not to stay after Silva. On contemplating from the last hill which allowed a view of Rome, as if painted with a delicate pencil on the bar of gold left by the setting sun, that long range of purple domes so beautiful in its appearance, and yet destined to so speedy a decline, I felt, amid my own accelerating steps towards dissolution, some comfort in the thought that, like the lowliest individuals, the proudest empires of the present day were hastening to a certain and proximate end.

The ascent of the mountains seemed to last an eternity. At Narni we found every horse in the

place engaged for Arezzo; at Terni the same; and the same at Spoleto. Nor was it otherwise at Foligno. I began to complain, but excited little sympathy. "When saints perform miracles," was the answer, "sinners should stay at home." A person inclined to cavil might have replied that three drunken cobblers reeling in a wine-vault could see the madonna roll her eyes about any where as well as at Arezzo:—but the prodigy was become a mine of wealth to its before distressed church, and I held my tongue. "Truth," as Silva observed, "is a bad travelling companion."

After passing through several cities which looked like the deserted habitations of the Titans, in which had crept a race of pigmies, we arrived at Loretto, where, pulled one way by a guardian of the holy house, anxious that I should wipe away my old sins, and the other by a fair vender of crucifixes, desirous that I should commence a new score, I was only saved from leaving my cloak in the hands of the syren, by a pilgrim who had stolen it before.

At Ancona Silva pressed me to go on with him to Venice. "The sun of St. Mark indeed is set," he cried:—"its proud aristocrats were so long considering to whom they should sell themselves, that the bargain was struck at last without their participation: but, though Austria has finally swal-

lowed up the fat and torpid oyster of the lagun-, the empty shell still glitters, and is worth beholding."

"Silva,"—was my answer, "were I still the man I was, I might perhaps (whether right or wrong) wish to become something more than a mere spectator of European changes. At a moment when all the old monarchies of the west are ploughing up to receive the new seeds of a more promising system, I might myself like to assist in somewhere planting that tree without roots, of which the fruits are yet worth gathering: but you need only look at me to see that the gods no longer permit my health the exertion, or my spirits the hazard." "Here," added I,—laying my hand on the curly head of my child,—"is the sole remaining object of all my solicitude. Him I wish to place in a safe harbour. Do you then jolt on to Venice. As to me, I must be carried, as it shall please the winds and waves, to Trieste."

And ill it pleased these capricious, these democratic powers, to smooth my journey in the small felucca in which I embarked on the morrow of my boy's fifth birth-day. Scarce had we been six hours at sea when there arose from the north-west a most tremendous storm. We closed our hatches, took in as much sail as possible, and prepared to meet the hurricane. Every instant it increased, and the sea soon running mountain high, thence-

forward kept our starboard completely under water. At last the vessel sprung a leak, and the hold filled so fast, that nothing was thought of any longer but working at the pumps. Even I, as soon as I had seen my poor child lashed to his crib, fell to work with the rest—though small was my strength, and trifling my assistance.

Contrary to every suggestion of common sense, the reïs resolved to run in between the nearest islets on the coast of Dalmatia. It was in vain to represent the danger of striking against some hidden reef, or stranding upon a lee-shore; and we only wondered which of the two would be our fate, when providentially the storm abated as suddenly as it had arisen, and enabled us with our ship full of water, and our rigging all in tatters, to put into a little creek on the island of Melada. Here we found a Ragusan vessel, driven in by the same storm, but with a miserably foul bill of health,—insomuch that the crews unguardedly mixing, we learnt to our great dismay that we must make up our minds, on our arrival at Trieste, to a fresh quarantine.

I now recollected that just at midnight, and when the storm was at its height, a tremendous flash of lightning had during an instant shown me the frightful spectre ship, ever hurried, as they told me, with growing speed round the globe, and announc-

ing destruction to the crews which beheld it. The vision appeared as if advancing full sail to run our vessel down; then vanished as by magic, and left no trace behind. Immediately the storm was hushed, the wind dropped, and all the danger of a shipwreck ceased. The plague seemed therefore the foe by which—I concluded—we were to fall:—but on inquiry, none save myself had seen the phantom.

CHAPTER XV.

As soon as the damage was repaired, we again hurried on board, and put to sea. All now looked most propitious. Nothing could exceed the serenity of the weather: we scudded right before the wind, —become a gentle but steady breeze; and, though my health had not greatly benefited by my late severe labour, yet the sea air seemed a balm, sent to soften the ailments produced by the sea water. My aches were less acute, and my spirits more buoyant than they had been for some time past, and, as I lay on the deck basking in the April sun, with the purple dolphins sporting round the ship, and my own little cherub playing by my side, more visions of delight danced in my imagination than there sparkled liquid diamonds upon the azure wave. With that yet untasted repose which I should now soon enjoy, my inward sores, I thought, might still slowly heal; or, if I was doomed never more to recover my former vigour, what then? It was neither in the palæstra nor on the race-ground that I proposed to shine. I should only be the fitter for that tranquil life, henceforth the only object of my tempered wishes. My cousin's letter had promised

me a brilliant lot, and—what was better—my own pockets insured me a decent competence. The refinements of an European education should add every external elegance to my boy's innate excellence, and, having myself moderately enjoyed the good things of this world, while striving to deserve the better promised in the next, I should, ere my friends became tired of my dotage, resign my last breath in the arms of my child.

The blue sky seemed to smile upon my cheerful thoughts, and the green wave to murmur approbation of my plan. Almighty God! what was there in it so heinous, to deserve that an inexorable fate should cast it to the winds?

In the midst of my dream of happiness, my eye fell upon the darling object which could alone render that dream a reality. Insensibly my child's prattle had diminished,—the cheerful sound of his voice had subsided in an unusual silence. I thought he looked pale: his eyes seemed heavy, and his lips felt parched. The rose, that very morning still so fresh, so erect on its stalk, at mid-day hung its head, discoloured, wan, and fading:—but so frequently had the billows, during the pitiless storm, drenched my boy's little crib, that I could not wonder he too should have felt the effects of their protracted fury, at least in the shape of a severe cold. I put him to bed, and tried to hush him to sleep. Soon however his face grew flushed, and his pulse became

feverish. I failed alike in my endeavours to procure him repose, and to afford him amusement:—but, though playthings were repulsed, and tales no longer attended to, still could he not bear me an instant out of his sight; nor would he take any thing except at my hands. Even when—as too soon it did—his reason began to wander, his filial affection seemed only to cling the more firmly to his heart. It had grown into an adoration of his equally doting father; and the mere consciousness of my presence seemed to relieve his uneasiness.

Had not joy, just before, possessed me so entirely, alarm would not so soon have mastered my whole being: but I had throughout life found every transport of happiness, much exceeding the ordinary measure, followed by some unforeseen calamity; and my exultation had just risen to so unusual a pitch, that at once my dismay became proportionably deep. A sense of dreadful apprehension soon completely chilled my blood: I felt convinced that I had only been carried to so high a pinnacle of joy, in order to be hurled with greater ruin into an abyss of woe. Such became my anxiety to reach Trieste, and to obtain the best medical assistance, that, even while the ship continued to cleave the waves like an arrow, I fancied it lay like a log upon the main. How then did my pangs increase when, as if in resentment of my un-

just complaints, the breeze, dying away, really left our keel motionless on the waters! My anguish baffled all expression.

In truth I do not know how I preserved my senses, except from the need in which I stood of their aid:—for while we lay cursed with absolute immobility, and the sun ever found us on rising in the same place where it had left us at setting, my child—my darling child—was every instant growing worse, and sinking apace under the pressure of illness. To the deep and flushing glow of a complexion, far exceeding in its ominous brilliancy even health's rosiest hue, had succeeded a settled, unchanging, deadly paleness. His eye, whose round full orb was wont, when I appeared, to beam with filial love, now sunk, dim, and wandering, for the most part remained half closed; and when—roused by my address—my angel child strove to raise his languid look, and to meet my fearful glance, it was to show all the mild radiance of his countenance extinguished. In the more violent bursts indeed of his unceasing delirium, his wasting features sometimes acquired a fresh but sad expression. He would then start up, and with his feeble hands clasped together, and big tears rolling down his faded cheeks, beg in heart-breaking terms to be restored to his home: but mostly he seemed absorbed in inward musings, and—no longer taking

note of the passing hour—he frequently, during the endless day, moved his pallid lips in low but earnest speech,—as if repeating to himself the prayer which his sweet voice used to pour forth, at bed-time and at rising; and the fervent imploration of Heaven's blessing, added to it by his father, in behalf of his mother. If—wretched to see him thus, and doubly agonised to think myself the cause—I burst out into tears which I strove to hide, his perception of outward objects seemed all at once for a moment to return. He asked me whether I was hurt, and would lament that, young and feeble as he was, he could not yet nurse me as he wished;—but promised me better care when he should grow stronger.

In this way hour after hour and day after day rolled on, without any progress in our voyage; while all I had left to do was to sit doubled over my child's couch, watching all his wants, and studying all his looks,—trying, but in vain, to discover some amendment. "O for those days!"—I now thought, —"when a calm at sea appeared an intolerable evil, only because it stopped some tide of folly, or delayed some scheme of vice!"

At last, one afternoon, when, totally exhausted with want of sleep, I sat down by my child in all the composure of torpid despair, the sailors rushed in one and all:—for even they had felt my agony, and doted on my boy. They came to cheer me

with better tidings. A breeze had just sprung up! The waves had again begun to ripple, and the lazy keel to stir. As minute pressed on minute, the motion of the ship became swifter; and presently —as if nothing had been wanting but a first impulse, —we again dashed through the waves with all our former speed.

Every hour now brought us visibly nearer the inmost recess of the deep Adriatic, and the end of our journey. Pola seemed to glide by like a vision: presently we passed Fiume: we saw Capo d'Istria but a few minutes;—at last we descried Trieste itself! Another half hour, and every separate house became visible; and not long after we ran full sail into the harbour. The sails were taken in, the anchor was dropped, and a boat instantly came alongside.

All the necessary preparations had been made for immediately conveying my patient on shore. Wrapped up in a shawl, he was lifted out of his crib, laid on a pillow, and lowered into the boat, where I held him in my lap, protected to the best of my power from the roughness of the blast and the dashing of the spray, until we reached the quay.

In my distress I had totally forgotten the taint contracted at Melada, and had purposed, the instant we stepped on shore, to carry my child straight to a physician. New anguish pierced my soul, when two bayonets crossed upon my breast forced

me, in spite of my alternate supplication and rage, to remain on the jettee, there to wait his coming, and his previous scrutiny of all our healthy crew. All I could obtain as a special favour was a messenger to hurry his approach, while, panting for his arrival, I sat down with my Alexis in my arms under a low shed which kept off a pelting shower. I scarce know how long this situation lasted. My mind was so wrapped up in the danger of my boy, as to remain wholly unconscious of the bustle around, except when the removal of some cask or barrel forced me to shift my station. Yet, while wholly deaf to the unceasing din of the place, I could discern the faintest rumour that seemed to announce the approaching physician. O how I cursed his unfeeling delay: how I would have paved his way with gold, to have hastened his coming!—and yet a something whispered continually in my ear, that the utmost speed of man could no longer avail.

Ah! that at least, confirmed in this sad persuasion, I might have tasted the heart-rending pleasure of bestowing upon my departing child the last earthly endearments!—but, tranquil, composed, and softly slumbering as he looked, I feared to disturb a repose, on which I founded my only remaining hopes. All at once, in the midst of my despair, I saw a sort of smile light up my darling's features,

and, hard as I strove to guard against all vain illusions, I could not at this sight stop a ray of gladness from gliding unchecked into my trembling heart. Short however was the joy: soon vanished the deceitful symptom! On a closer view it only appeared to have been a slight convulsion which had hurried over my child's now tranquil countenance, as will sometimes dart over the smooth mirror of a dormant lake the image of a bird in the air. It looked like the response of a departing angel, to those already on high that hailed his speedy coming. The soul of my Alexis was fast preparing for its flight.

Lest he might feel ill at ease in my lap, I laid him down upon my cloak, and kneeled by his side to watch the growing change in his features. The present now was all to me: the future I knew I no longer should reck. Feeling my breath close to his cheek, he half opened his eye, looked as if after a long absence again suddenly recognising his father, and—putting out his little mouth—seemed to crave one last token of love. The temptation was too powerful: I gently pressed my lip upon that of my babe, and gathered from it the proffered kiss. Life's last faint spark was just going forth, and I caught it on the threshold. Scarce had I drawn back my face, when all respiration ceased. His eye-strings broke, his features fell, and his limbs

stiffened for ever. All was over: Alexis was no more—Euphrosyne avenged,—and Anastasius the wretch he had long deserved to be!

I shed no tears; I moaned not; I made myself not a spectacle for the gaping multitude: but, ordered to the lazaretto, I threw my cloak over what had been my heart's best treasure, and, with the sacred burthen in my arms, silently proceeded to where I was shown my temporary prison. There, in the lonely cell allotted for my more favoured confinement, I found leisure to make myself acquainted with my grief, and to contemplate in its altered, its new condition, that countenance, that form and those features, once all the company I coveted upon this globe, and now leaving me in solitude, though placed by my side.

At the outset of my voyage from the East, when, on recovering my scattered senses, the first object which met my eyes was my adored child,—when, after infinite toil and misgivings, I saw my Alexis at last safe in my possession,—I had, in all the ecstacy of unutterable joy, fallen on my knees beside the sweet babe wrapt in soft slumbers before me; and had almost worshipped him as the pledge of my indestructible felicity. Now, at the close of the same voyage, and arrived at the place of my long looked-for destination, but with my hopes entirely blasted, my happiness destroyed, and the being in which centered my existence no more, I knelt a

second time, in an agony of grief beyond all utterance, beside that same beloved boy, again lying before me, but—a breathless corpse! At first indeed I gazed as if insensible of the awful change. My mind was so confused, so bewildered, that—perhaps from excess of grief—I seemed not to feel at all, and could only upbraid myself for my strange insensibility. My imagination refused to conceive that lovely frame, so lately still the seat of the warmest affection and the tenderest piety, as nothing now but a clod of icy clay, unconscious of my anguish, insensible to my embrace. Steadfastly as I contemplated my wretchedness, it was so great that neither eye nor intellect could compass its extent; —and for a while I thought I must be labouring under some dreadful dream, whose illusion would vanish, and whose end would be my waking.

But when from the object immediately before me I carried my eye to more distant points, to wider circles of time and space;—when I reflected that on my child alone I had built all my remaining prospects of earthly comfort and joy; that for my child alone I had left home, friends, and country, to encounter strange regions, climes, and people; that to my child's converse alone I looked for all the solace of what few days were still vouchsafed me, as well as to his piety for the few flowers that at my death might deck my bier; that in his beloved arms I had hoped to breathe my last; nay, that

a thousand times, in the idle fancies of my entranced brain, I had flattered myself with leaving him such a blessing to the world, as by the virtues of the son to atone for the sins of the father, and to cause the sire himself to be blessed in his offspring; and when, from these excursions of my distracted mind, I reverted to what was left me of these fond and foolish visions,—then it was that my grief at last forced its way through the stupor by which it seemed compressed, and that the flood-gates of my tears, long locked, at last burst open. Then did my increased agony find vent, and no longer wear the semblance of a stone-like apathy.

It was not my child whose change demanded pity. He had indeed, by my ill-fated fondness, been torn from a scene of every bliss which could surround his tender years. From a nursery of comforts he had been taken by force on a journey of privations and perils, and his series of youthful sufferings had ended in a painful illness, and a premature death:—but what of that? Heaven, it has long been acknowledged, marks its special favourites by an early removal from this abode of sorrow. My child's short cares were over, and his irksome career closed at its very outset. He had quitted a world of bitterness and corruption, ere yet his susceptible heart had felt its cruel thorns, or his pure mind had been sullied by its foulness. Called away while, in the gay spring of his existence, tears

only soft as April showers had yet bedewed his rosy cheeks, he had been wafted on high, still robed in all the brightness of his native innocence; and, ere his guileless mind could yet have lost aught of its holiness, he had joined his brother angels in the realms of bliss eternal. There—while his father was still struggling on the stormy sea of life,—he, already safe from ill, dwelt in endless glory in the bosom of his Maker.

But I—I alone—remained oppressed by a weight of woe unutterable! Partly by chance and partly from my own fault, every relation, every friend, every common acquaintance with which I had commenced life—estranged by degrees through my own wayward conduct—had left me a being wholly insulated, precisely at that age when, weaned from a deceitful world, man begins to want comfort at home. Frightened at my increasing loneliness, I had in my turn looked out for a something on which to bestow those affections, doomed to run to waste just as they began to rise. Long I sought; often fancied I held, and often again either cast away or lost the prize. At last Heaven seemed to pity my loneliness, and to favour my search—to smile upon a feeling so blameless. After much anxiety and sore disappointment, I found the wished-for solace,—and found it in my own child, long severed from my arms.

Him I beheld where I could least have expected

it: him, after much fear and doubt, I regained; and him I thenceforth destined to become my only stay,—the support and the joy of my remaining life. That, with regard to this last and dearest treasure of my soul I had, for once, acted up to my fair intentions and fulfilled all my duties, my heart bore me witness. From the moment my Alexis was mine in reality as in thought, he became the sole object of my unceasing solicitude, the sole theme of my constant contemplation. Casting off all other cares, spurning far away from me all other vain pursuits; no longer caring for aught of which he was not the sole end and motive, nor en gaging in aught which promoted not his benefit, I devoted to him all the strength of my body, and all the powers of my mind: I watched over his developement by day and by night.

Heaven seemed for a while determined to reward with its utmost liberality so irreproachable a sentiment. Almost from the first hour of my possessing him I reaped every day some fresh fruit of my care, and received earnests every day of far richer fruits still ripening. My Alexis possessed exquisite faculties; and the slightest culture sufficed to elicit them. At first indeed he had looked upon me as an enemy; as one who had torn him forcibly from his friends: but at last,—and when convinced by my tenderness of the excess of my affection,—he had realised all my long trembling hopes; had ful-

filled in every way all my most ardent wishes; had begun to return my undivided fondness with all the fervour of his own affectionate disposition. No child ever doted on a mother as he did on his father:—and, if our love even becomes riveted to an object by the mere unrequited care and pains bestowed upon it, how unbounded became, with the return which I experienced, my adoration of my angel child, need or can I describe! He alone was the joy of my eyes, and the pride of my vain glorious heart; and, as I walked forth with him in public; as I saw every stranger gazing on his lovely countenance, smiling at his playful prattle, and almost spell-bound by the charm that seemed to hover round his person, parental exultation swelled that foolish heart within me, and made my eyes overflow with rapturous delight. I seemed only to move along, for the purpose of enjoying a constant triumph.

Nay,—that parental fondness which, bearing in all its parts on one single point, and in that single point finding the firmest support, must under any circumstances have acquired an unexampled intensity, had still had its growth accelerated beyond the ordinary measure, by the peculiarities of my anomalous condition.

That very same instant which had, on Egypt's barren shore, brought my labours for the possession of my child to a happy conclusion, was also that which witnessed the beginning of my incessantly

continued journey, toward the distant point which was to be my final goal, and where I hoped to sit down at last in peaceful enjoyment of the treasure I had won. From the momentous period which had seen my Alexis first pressed to my still panting bosom, every later successive day—nay, almost every successive hour—had beheld me wafted to some new point under the heavens, to some new latitude on the earth, wholly distinct and different from the preceding ones. No region, no city, no abode had, since my departure from Alexandria, afforded me a permanent sojourn, or fixed me long enough to excite in my breast the smallest local attachment, the least fondness of which I had not brought the seeds in my own bosom:—or, should even in any place some slight interest have arisen, not unlawful in itself, and which might in a more stationary condition have been allowed to take some hold of my heart, have covered with some fair exotic the spots left bare by the native attachments eradicated, and have in some degree divided my affections with my soul's chief treasure,—bereft, from the ever changing scene through which I hurried, of all leisure for its cultivation, I had sedulously crushed its first shoots, as those of an intruding and troublesome stranger.

But the more my state of incessant locomotion had thus made all else pass by unregarded, or unable to leave any permanent impression, the more

had it caused my own child, my only never failing companion, to entwine himself with double force round every fibre of the paternal heart:—for, at the same time that that constant impulse forward which both sire and son obeyed had suffered no other object to enter into the smallest competition with my boy for my genuine affections, it had occasioned an uninterrupted closeness in my daily intercourse with him, had demanded on my part a minuteness of parental offices with respect to his little person, had given me a habit of unremittingly hearing his sweet voice, nay had, amid all this seeming sameness of sentiments and impressions, thrown a variety in the places, the modes, and the circumstances of our relative existence and endearments, infinitely exceeding what any different and stationary condition, even with my Alexis—and no one else but that dear child—clinging to my side unceasingly, could have ever afforded. The short, the happy period of my life, marked by the recovery of my Euphrosyne's last bequest, had offered the treasure, not merely—as does in most cases so short a possession—in one place, one occupation, one shape: it had offered my Alexis, while constantly placed in view, yet constantly in a different form, and action, and mode of being: it had offered him successively in Egypt, at Maltha, in Sicily, at Naples, at Rome, at Ancona, and in every place either of repose or thoroughfare, intervening between these

distant points: it had offered him in capitals and on the road, at rest and in action; now gliding in a light skiff on the waves, now whirled on smoking wheels over hill and dale; now wondering at the sights of cities, now enjoying rural pastimes and scenery; now in the simple garb of the infant traveller, now gorgeously attired to attract the public gaze; now all alertness, and rousing by his arch and playful caresses even his listless father, now himself oppressed with the fatigues of the journey and asleep in my arms: and thus I had gone on from place to place, collecting and compressing in a small space a variety of pictures of his infantine person, pursuits and adventures—all lovely and yet all different—far beyond what the longest period of years could have accumulated in the slow changes of a stationary existence; and which, carefully treasured up in my memory, and always present to my imagination, had furnished by their multitude materials for an affection and a worship, far exceeding what even tender parents, but distracted by a variety of ties, can find to divide among their numerous offspring: —and, at the eve of accomplishing my labours and reaching my destination, this all absorbing adoration of a child in appearance not less exuberant in bodily health than moral excellence, was already ushering me into a scene of lawful and rapturous felicity only expected to end with my own life, when all at once a Providence—mindful of my

sins when I had forgotten them—had even reversed the course of nature to cut short that existence on which my own depended, to destroy at one blow my new and hard earned happiness, and to leave me, from one possessed of all his heart desired, a forlorn wretch in a strange country and among a stranger race;—with not one object to cling to on this side an obscure and lonely grave.

Yet with such dismal thoughts rending my mind, and the more dreary object laid out before my eyes, did the benumbing powers of affliction itself—of an affliction perfect in all its parts; of an affliction no longer leaving room for hope or fear, no longer affording an excitement or permitting a struggle—at last procure me a short respite from its sting. Yielding to the torpor which by degrees came over my senses, I fell into a profound sleep; and the trance lasted unbroken until the dawn of the following day: but the moment of waking was dreadful beyond all former moments. I had dreamed of my child; I had, in the lying vision, seen him convalescent: my heart's treasure had again seemed to revive, and to thank me for a care no longer wanted, when—awaking with a burst of joy, and turning round—I saw .... O God of heavens!

I now gave way afresh to my despair; with frantic violence hugged to my bosom the cold corpse of my boy, and swore no earthly power should tear it from my arms,—until by degrees the mild entreaties

of my fellow prisoners made my grief assume a less insensate form.

After frequent relapses I prepared to perform to my child's sad remains the last duties of a man, a Christian, and a father. In the gloomy precincts of the lazaretto I saw the narrow cell hollowed out, which henceforth was to hold all I cared for on earth. Then, kissing for the last time those faded eyes which never more were to beam upon me, and those livid lips which no longer felt the pressure of mine, I suffered the dreary winding-sheet of death to shroud from my further view my angel's altered features; and carried him weeping to his last home: but when the moment came—after the priest had concluded his office—to lower into the foul jaws of the grave, and to resign to corruption that lovely body—that last relic of my short lived felicity, I scarce felt courage for the dismal task: I clung to what I was going to lose, until fresh violence became necessary; and when over the idol of my boastful heart I again beheld the ground made like all other ground: "Now come," cried I, "whenever it list, my own final hour! I shall hail it as the healer of sorrows; as the friend who springs forward to receive suffering man, when all other friends depart."

Sad indeed was the void which I found from those days, when I could not go out even for a few minutes, without paying the tribute of a farewell

embrace, and could never come home without finding a sweet welcome awaiting me on the very threshold: when every look of sorrow I betrayed was met by filial sympathy, and every glance of satisfaction I gave filled my child's heart with glad ness. Ah! while I drank daily draughts of these unutterable raptures, the very confinement of a lazaretto had been a scene of joy: now that they were to be no more, the liberation from my prison only promised fresh grief.

Soon, however, the period of enlargement came: —for the quarantine had only been incurred by an untoward accident; and in a very few days I received a formal notice that its term had expired. Once more I went to the hallowed spot where lay buried all my hopes, and once more bedewed its turf with bitter tears:—then, retiring with slow and lingering steps, I left the sad enclosure, and launched forth again into the haunts of men.

But I re-entered them without joy, as I did without anxiety. Things gone by no longer gave a value to things to come. The golden link which had so gloriously conjoined the past and the future had been riven—been snapped asunder. The Anastasius of the morrow was no longer the Anastasius of the eve. The wide new world which I was going to tread, was a world devoid of interest; and the vast new prospects unfolding to my view, were prospects without life, animation, or sunshine.

Struck by heaven's vengeful lightning, my soul saw nothing in the dark surrounding waste to cheer its deathlike sadness, and shrunk from every slightest exertion as from an Herculean labour. On every stone I met in my way, I could have laid me down to die.

My only consolation consisted in the multiplicity of my sufferings, and in the sage speculations of the medical professors whom I consulted on my health, merely to get rid of the gratuitous prescriptions of the multitude: for though the members of the faculty seemed to think it likely that the effects of the storm at Melada, the anxious watching during my child's illness, and more than all, the grief for his loss, might have very much aggravated the symptoms of the original complaint, yet they agreed unanimously that, even without these additional circumstances, the internal injury received on the beach at Alexandria—whether in the lungs, or the liver, or the spleen, no matter,—must still alike have ended in my not very distant demise: and, what cruel regret, what dire forebodings must have disturbed my death-bed, had I been obliged to leave my Alexis in a strange land a helpless unprotected orphan, exposed not only to all the violence of the rapacious but all the wiles of the profligate, and perhaps, in the weakness of unsuspecting childhood, not only stripped of his property, but despoiled—for ever despoiled—of his

more precious innocence, were what I even now shuddered to think of. The dread of such consequences must have rendered the last hour of my life the most painful of my existence. Instead of that, my child's short account on earth was closed for ever, ere the least alloy of evil could dim his spotless purity:—his bliss eternal was sealed beyond repeal. Of his endless happiness no doubt could be harboured any longer. Self, worthless self was all I henceforth had to think of; and the pangs of that self alone to lessen—if I could.

And even of these too well deserved sufferings the sting was greatly blunted—the edge was removed—by the consciousness that their period was limited. My loneliness upon earth could not be of long duration; my punishment here below must soon draw to a close: nay, the very torments that might, in the severity of eternal justice, await me hereafter, would be soothed by knowing that my child shared not in them, but, while his father paid the penalty of his manifold offences, enjoyed in other realms the reward of his piety:—and I sometimes even presumed to think that perhaps, after so dire an affliction, so severe a trial as that which concluded my earthly career, some portion even of my own heavy debt might be remitted,—when the last moment of my stay here below, which the parting from my still earth-bound child must have rendered the most irksome of my life, would, by re-

uniting me for ever to my angel above, become the most blessed of my unwished-for existence.

Meantime,—a stranger in the place to which my destiny had brought me, and not ranking among those privileged children of the globe, licensed to indulge to the utmost of their wish in every luxury, even unto that of grief—I felt I must bestir myself, under pain of being, like a bruised reed, crushed and flung on the dunghill. What was life after all, but an *aria di bravura* such as I had heard at Naples;—often performed with an anguished heart, but which, when once undertaken, we must achieve in the best way we can! Accordingly I resolved, if dead to pleasure, at least to rouse myself to business, and, hushing in my heart those gnawing sorrows which no one around me could share in or alleviate, again prepared to look, to speak, and to act, in public, like other men.

My first exertion was to inquire after the kindly intentioned kinsman, whose invitation had brought me to Trieste, but whose existence I had for a time wholly forgotten. On waking from my trance and remembering my relation, I rather wondered that he should thus, in my distress, have kept aloof. Alas! he too had, since I last heard from him, paid the debt of nature, and disabled me from paying that of gratitude. I say of gratitude;—for, though his will had been left in the main as it stood before my journey, it had been amplified by a handsome legacy

in my favour, to soften my disappointment, in case I should be found to have complied with his summons. The bequest put me at once in possession of a considerable sum of ready money, when I would have wanted spirits to convert into cash my now loathed jewels.

Trieste, which I had before intended to make my permanent residence, was become since my misfortune the place least fitted for my abode. Not only the living multitudes of a commercial city had not leisure to sympathise with my situation, but the very inanimate objects it presented were of the sort most discordant with my present frame of mind. Those rocks which, left in their native ruggedness, would have harmonised with my gloomy feelings, here were only beheld shaped in bustling quays and busy wharfs: those forests which, abandoned to silence and solitude, might have favoured my melancholy musings, here were only to be viewed transformed into noisy hulks and naked masts. Gold was the only substance worshipped on this altar of Mammon in its pure primitive shape; but gold was precisely the only production of nature which I would rather have seen, by a later transformation, converted into whatever could have afforded my mind some abstraction from its sorrows. I therefore thought that, if I returned at all among my fellow creatures, it should only be where I found them collected in such myriads, as

to recover amidst their overflowing crowds all the privileges of solitude. Upon this principle Vienna became destined in my mind for my ultimate abode. —There I might try to acquire the miserable happiness which was to depend upon forgetting.

While I staid at Trieste, however, people would insist upon diverting me. It was a difficult undertaking, with my mind full of sorrow, and an abscess forming in my side. Once only, finding myself somewhat easier than usual, I abruptly left my couch, and indulged my curiosity by creeping to a party.

I own that, when launched into its vortex, and beholding a number of figures towards whom I felt no attraction either of kindred, country, or even common interests, amusements or language, whirl around me in idle hurry, nay, sometimes stop in the midst of their inane bustle to look at myself, to point me out to each other, and to see how my adventures sat upon me;—reflecting moreover how soon even this mere spectacle must to me cease altogether,—I felt a sort of pleasure. But it was the pleasure of one who wanders in the delusion of a morning dream through imaginary meads and gardens, among phantoms flitting about him in their twilight revels; and who feels all the while that they only wait, to glide off and disappear, for that approaching dawn which must break his sleep,

and cause his final waking among scenes and beings of a different nature.

Loth to leave the place where slept my Alexis; loth to quit the last shore to which my child had been wafted,—finding my only solace in listening day after day on the quay facing the lazaretto, to the surf beating against its piers in slow and solemn pulses,—I do not know how long I might still have remained at Trieste, taking no account of time, but, while ever intending to go, ever putting off my journey, had not the fear of travelling late in the season made me resolve, before the summer should wholly pass by, to secure my winter quarters.

Not long therefore after the memorable treaty of Campo Formio, which filled Trieste with joy by annihilating Venice, a brilliant autumn eve saw brought to their conclusion the short preparations for my departure the next morning.

My bills paid, my passports signed, my post horses ordered—having nothing further to think of or to settle in the place I was leaving,—I went to take my last turn on my favourite quay.

The sun was just dropping behind the purple expanse of the Adriatic, and I, indulging my favourite dream, that perhaps the glorious luminary which not only through its constant emanations supports the inferior surrounding planets, but by

its central situation is itself exempted from all the vicissitudes they suffer, might be the first halting-place of the blessed that depart from other orbs, and in its bright bosom might harbour my own Alexis,—when I was diverted from this object of vague and distant contemplation by one less remote,—namely two persons, apparently just released from quarantine, who were advancing towards the city, and consequently towards me. They wore the Greek dress, and, common as the sight was at Trieste, it yet engaged my attention as one which would become rare on my impending removal. Of the two strangers the shortest particularly attracted my notice. As he approached, a crowd of confused images rushed upon my mind. I almost fancied I saw . . . ! but the thing seemed improbable;—and yet, at every successive step which brought him nearer, the impression, so far from lessening, acquired greater strength,—until at last I grew quite convinced of its truth. The person I gazed upon must be—it was Spiridion! Spite of his darker complexion and his more manly form, I no longer could doubt I beheld the fond friend of former days. As to himself,—intent upon the surrounding scenery—he would have passed me by unheeded, but for my stopping directly in his way, in order to take one more silent survey of his person, ere I ventured to hail my long estranged companion.

Thus pointedly approached, he looked at me in

his turn, first indeed with an expression only of surprise at such a scrutiny from one in the Frank attire; but, by degrees, with a more fixed stare—as if he thought himself under a delusion which he wanted to shake off. He gazed alternately on my features, which proclaimed an old friend, and on my dress, which bespoke an entire stranger.

Human patience could hold out no longer: "Am I then so changed," cried I, "that even my Spiridion cannot recognise his—I would have said, once beloved—Anastasius?"

My voice was still the same. At its once familiar sounds the son of Mavrocordato seemed seized with a sudden thrilling, and again stepped back: but this time in wonder—in amazement.

"And is it then really," cried he at last, "Anastasius I behold?"

Nothing but diffidence, the tardy offspring of misfortune, had prevented me, the moment I recognised my friend, from clasping him in my arms. Could I have suspected that without the same cause on his part, he would have evinced a similar hesitation to press me to his bosom, no temptation would have induced me to make myself known. I would have let him pass by unstayed; and never—no! never would I again, with my consent, have thrown myself in his way. His cold reception chilled me to the heart and paralysed my tongue. Spiridion saw me appalled, and Spiridion—I thought—enjoyed the sight!—

for, without one single word to relieve my embarrassment, he waited in solemn silence my tardy and faltering speech. His looks seemed to say: "each his turn: yours came first."—And yet, no cold or calculating motive could have found access to his breast,—to that breast pure and generous as the sun. But he had witnessed all my errors, and he knew not my repentance.

For this, however, I made not at the time the allowance which was due:—"Spiridion," cried I, as soon as I felt able to speak; "your searching eye need not tell me what I already know too well. I no longer am he who looked defiance at all on earth; and at Heaven itself. Sickness and sorrow have bent me to the ground;"—and, overcome by my recollections, I burst into tears.

A slight blush now tinged Spiridion's cheek. In a faltering voice he attempted an excuse—probably as little understood by himself as it was by me; and, labouring to repress a rising emotion, told me where he meant to lodge, and begged I would call upon him.

Thus constrained in his very apologies, he only, in trying to withdraw the dagger thrust into my bosom, gave me fresh pangs. I inclined my head to thank him, but raised it with a glance of conscious independence, and, leaving to the friend of my youth, as my last legacy, a faint smile of reproof, darted away.

As soon as Spiridion was out of sight I turned back, and went home. All my business at Trieste was concluded. I determined to set off immediately. My chaise was brought round: the horses put to it, and my trunks fastened on.

Among the stones reserved from Khedieh was a singularly beautiful ruby. Often pressed to sell the precious gem, I had always refused to part with my carbuncle. It had been set apart to please my own eye—perhaps, some day, to purchase a powerful patron. But to pleasure I was become indifferent, and I no longer needed an earthly patron. I slipped the sparkling stone, wrapped up in paper, between the folds of Spiridion's own pocket-book, which till now had never been out of my bosom, and, putting the still valued memorial under cover, sent it to my old companion with the following superscription:

"To one who for his friend once gave up all, and whose devotion is best remembered when it no longer can avail, Anastasius—rich in worthless jewels, poor in all beside—sends this last token of ancient affection, and of endless gratitude."

No sooner was the parcel out of my sight, than I too departed.

CHAPTER XVI.

It was my intention to have travelled all night: but at the second stage want of horses stopped my progress. I therefore desired some refreshment, a fire, and a bed. The stove was lighted, a slice of cold meat set before me between a bottle of wine and a flask of more potent spirits, and, in answer to the last of my requests, the female who acted as waiter pointed to a huge mountain of eiderdown, in a corner of the room.

Having finished my supper, and hanging over the slowly warming stove, I insensibly fell into a review of all the various and motley vicissitudes which had marked my portion of that changeful dream called human life. First I went back to its remotest periods, to those passed in the place of my nativity; played over all the gambols of my infancy, and all the frolics of my boyhood; viewed in its minutest details the paternal abode, remembered the most trivial incidents of the family circle, and heard the peculiar sound of voice of each of its members—their gossip, their scolding, and their loud peals of laughter, with a distinctness and a

proximity which left the memory of the more important events of later years comparatively vague, dark, indistinct reminiscences. With the rekindling of my youngest flame, and with the retracing of my earliest flight,—that disgraceful flight which cut me off from all connexion with the land of my birth, and entirely divided the first stage of my life from all its later periods,—I closed the first chapter of my history.

Scarce could my heart even now refrain from bounding, as I recalled the rapturous intoxication of my spirits, when, in the morning of my days,—like the young pilgrim with locks flowing in the wind, and wallet carelessly flung across the shoulder,—I set out upon the second stage of my journey through life: when, simply but smartly attired, the soft down just budding on my lips, and the infant hopes expanding in my mind, I went forth with erect crest and buoyant step, in quest of pleasure and of fame; and finally, when in the Morea, reaping an ample harvest of both, I achieved my first prowess, and heard my first praises. Hassan's lip had long been silenced by death; but the music of his applause still rung in my ears.

Launched next into the maddening vortex of the capital, I still smiled at the recollection of the Jew doctor, shuddered at that of the Bagnio, and, though quite alone, averted my eyes as from a spectre, on remembering Anagnosti, pale, bloody,

and with my murderous dagger buried in his breast! To fly the ghastly image I crossed the raging main, roamed in the plains of Egypt, and, after seeing myself successively a kiashef rioting in luxury, and an outcast fleeing for his life, I in turns became a humble hadjee crawling on his knees at Mekkah, and a conceited coxcomb sporting his saucy wit at Stambool.

Now rose predominant the figure of my friend Spiridion! I mean the Spiridion all heart, all affection, of former days,—between whom and his namesake of yesterday the connecting link seemed wanting. Parted, by my own fault, from my only real friend, I again roved, successively a soldier of fortune at Cairo, a warrior in Wallachia, and a merchant on the Bosphorus.

But Ismir! But Euphrosyne!—The thought harrowed up my soul. To pluck the gnawing worm from my bosom, I plunged into the deepest desert, and joined the most daring of sectaries. At last, become a tender husband, I suffered for my sins in my amendment, and soon consigned to earth a fond and virtuous wife; when—spurned by one friend as I had spurned another—I fled to Arabs less godly but less faithless than the Wahhabees, and, under their new banners, founded my worldly fortune in the plains of Khedieh. Growing a coward as I grew rich, I pursued—loaded with rubies and clothed in rags—my solitary course

towards the setting sun, till, casting off my slough in the concealment of the capital, I flew on the wings of parental love to the coast of Egypt ;—and at Alexandria, sought, saw, and won my child !

Oh ! that I could here end my last chapter : that, to so many friends and relations, protectors and protected, one after the other swept away from the earth, I had not to add . . . . but so it was !—and now, with all that I looked forward to of joy, of pride, and of stay, laid prostrate for ever, I had nothing left me, but to sink irretrievably under one of those sorrows the more corroding, because they are unshared, unnoticed, unimagined by the surrounding throng ;—and to waste away my small remnant of life in tears resembling the rain drops that fall into the sea, untold, unheeded, and without leaving a trace.

Such was the feeling of sad, of entire abandonment in which my reflections terminated, that, to drive them away and to warm my withered heart, I rapidly drank off several draughts of the spirits placed beside me : after which, without undressing, I crept under the towering feather bed, desiring I might be called the instant the horses—expected home in the night—were ready to take me on.

In bed I found sleep, but not repose. A feverish restlessness insensibly grew as it were into a continuation of the last adventures of my life. I fancied myself dead, and lying in my coffin. The dim

tapers already cast on the space around the funereal glare which was to light my stiffened body to the darkness of the grave. Yet had I a faint perception of what was going forward. My limbs indeed were immoveable; but my eyes beheld, and my ears retained the power of hearing.

First appeared, as in a twilight, the persons most closely linked to my existence: my parents, Helena, Mavroyeni, and others. Their busts—for nothing more of them was perceptible—seemed floating in air. Sometimes they advanced as if to take a nearer look at my countenance, gazed some time on me in silence, and then again retired, making room for other ghosts waiting behind them, who in their turn performed the same evolutions, and, after sating their curiosity, equally vanished in space. Two persons only of the mute assemblage remained, after all the rest had disappeared. At first they presented no features which I recognised, but insensibly they assumed the resemblance, the one of Euphrosyne, the other of a venerable priest whom I had seen at Pera. Euphrosyne began by contemplating me awhile like all the phantoms that had preceded her, in total silence, and, though seeming to smile sweet forgiveness on her unfeeling despoiler, wore a funereal look which thrilled me to the soul. She repeatedly beckoned to me with emphatic gesture to join her: but each time my leaden limbs refused to do their office. At last the old

man spoke.—"In vain," he cried, "you try to meet. Your paths in life lay too far asunder."

"Ah!" now exclaimed in her turn the weeping maiden—whose voice, till then unheard, thrilled me to the soul:—"if he cannot come to me, I can at least go to him!"—and with outstretched arms she sprung forward to share my baleful destiny; but her lifeless form only fell like a millstone on my chest. Gasping for breath, I struggled to disengage myself from the oppressive load,—when, suddenly, what I held in close embrace no longer was Euphrosyne, but—the fiend Sophia!

Rage now swelled my breast, as fury flashed from the eyes of my antagonist. The lion and the serpent grappled. Each fixed his fangs in the other's quivering flesh: each strove to pluck the heart from the other's bleeding bosom:—until at last the baseless ledge on which we fought in air gave way under our feet.

Twined in each other's arms, down we now sank together; and I continued falling, until I woke at last in inexpressible horror, and found myself lying on the floor of the room, weltering in a stream of real blood, drawn forth from my vitals by my unconscious exertions. The confusion of my ideas just left me time enough to rejoice that I had only been dreaming, ere returning perception brought to my remembrance how much there was, in my frightful dream, of sad reality.

Scarce inferior to the fancied music of the spheres themselves, sounded at that moment in my stunned ear the hoarse note of the horn, which informed me that the driver was seated on his horse. Ill as I felt, I thought I could not get away too fast. The post-master indeed had informed me of a novelty, only witnessed since these before peaceful regions had become the seat of war; namely, robbers prowling in the neighbourhood. But who durst lay unhallowed hands on the already sentenced criminal! My death warrant, long signed, kept my life charmed until the hour of its lawful execution; and evil glances fall not more innocuous on spirits broken by adversity, than would the deadliest dagger on my heart, already turned to stone by grief.

Disregarding therefore every entreaty, every sinister foreboding of the landlord and his crew, I wrapped myself in my cloak, stepped into my calesh, and spite of the still undiminished darkness, again rolled on with renovated speed.

All that day, and all the ensuing night, I continued travelling without interruption: for, greatly as I wanted rest, I could nowhere bring myself to stop. It was only in proportion as I felt my body whirled along with greater speed, that my mind seemed to find somewhat more repose. A mysterious impulse, as it were, goaded me on without ceasing.

The sun of the third day was already lengthen-

ing the partial shadows that precede its disappearance, when I entered an extended heath, to whose beautiful and varied weeds heaven's declining luminary lent at that instant the glowing transparency, which announces its proximate setting. With singular force did the gaudy scene revive all the deep-felt impressions which objects of a similar description had once made on my younger mind in the plains of Ak-hissar:—or rather, it produced one of those moments in my life, when my sensations became so exactly the counterpart of what they had once been at some definite prior period perhaps long gone by, as to suggest the idea of my having, in a new point of space, reverted to an already experienced point of time; and of my going over afresh some former portion of my existence, already elapsed.

And, in fact, may not things created perform circles in time as they do in space? May not the limited scope of our present perceptions be alone the cause that prevents our embracing the vast revolutions produced by duration, as we compass the smaller circuits performed within the equally incomprehensible boundaries of extension?—and may not one of the brightest prerogatives of that more perfect promised state when time is said to cease, consist in that removal of its partial barriers, through means of which we shall be permitted equally to see the past in the future, and the future in the past?

Be that as it may:—no scene could, in the

splendor of its detail, exceed the one which my mind thus irresistibly retraced. Every where a carpet of anemones, hyacinths, and narcissuses covered the undulating ground. The oleander, the cistus and the rhododendron, blushing with crimson blossoms, marked the wide margins of the diminished torrents: glowing heaths, odoriferous genistas, thyme, lavender, and jesmine, started from every fissure of the marble-streaked rock; while its projecting crags were clothed in a moss of emerald green, through which trickled diamond drops of never failing water. Alternate tufts of arbutus, and mimosa, and bay, intermixed with the wild rose and myrtle, canopied the beetling brow of the precipice; but from the deeper bosom of the dell between, shot up like stately pillars supporting fretted arches, the ilex, the poplar, and the wide spreading plane. Here and there a presumptuous creeper—wily sycophant, raised by his very pliancy—overwhelmed with parasitic blossoms the topmost boughs of the tree on which it had fastened, and from its supporter's mighty limbs again fell in gay festoons to the ground. The air was loaded with fragrance: birds of every hue balanced their light forms on the bending twigs, and myriads of gilded insects emulated in brilliancy the flowers, round whose honied cup they vibrated their glassy wings.

Yet,—while other artists prize their meanest pro-

ductions, nature often seems to set so little value upon her choicest works, that this paradise lay in a secluded nook, far not only from the more beaten track of the traveller, but even from the haunts of the thinly scattered natives. No path ran through it in any direction: its very outskirts were scarce ever pressed by the stray foot of man, and its inmost recesses had not perhaps for centuries been darkened by his shadow. Every where the most lovely plants sprung up and again faded every year, without a single instant meeting the human eye:—but the concealment of these wonders produced not the least slackening in their progress: the activity of nature was not checked or diminished by the ignorance of man! Still did each later season see each varied form of vegetation, reckless of human blindness, expand at its due period, blow its full time in all its wonted splendor, and perform every successive function of its maturation and seeding, as it had done each former year.

Had I thence only inferred how little that self assumed lord of the creation, man, has of value in the eyes of Providence, even on that very globe of which he calls himself the master, and which he considers as created for his sole use and purposes, the induction would probably have been just, though thus far little consoling:—but I went further. Since it seemed incompatible with all perfect wisdom that

wonders, capable of affording exquisite delight, should be endlessly renewed, only to be endlessly unenjoyed—endlessly wasted, I inferred that even our own humble globe might be visited, unknown to us its ostensible tenants, by higher beings than ourselves, hovering in purer forms over their primitive haunts, and mixing unperceived with their still mortal kindred. Who could tell that the spirit of my own Alexis—wafted on the sun's untiring beams from its higher abode—might not at times flit among them; might not have sat on yon fair tulip which I so fondly gazed upon, and which bent its graceful head as I slowly passed by?

But does my mind wander already?—thus to swerve from my narrative:—On, on, my pen! Time runs short: I must hasten to the goal.

Some little perverse incidents, indeed, seemed now and then to start up, as if on very purpose to keep it longer in prospect. My carriage broke down at one place; in another I myself was stunned by a fall:—but these incidental rubs affected me no longer. The single deep affliction which encompassed my heart served as an impenetrable ægis against all lesser ills. It rendered me impervious to their superficial punctures. Never emerging from that twilight in which there are no partial shades, since there are no partial lights, my mind, no longer accessible to hope, no longer felt the pressure of disappointment.

A little before the dawn of the fourth day, however, there arose a somewhat singular circumstance, which affected me sufficiently to give a new direction to my movements. A pretty sharp ascent had made me alight among the Carinthian hills, in order to walk a few yards, and shake off the morning chill by which I felt quite benumbed. The road lay across a dark forest of firs, whose outline already was marked by the pale light of daybreak against the cold grey sky, but whose deep bosom still presented unbroken all the black and mysterious indistinctness of night. The trees in their funereal hues seemed sable mourners, gliding in long procession down the hills to witness my passage: the bleak winds breathed through their waving boughs deep and mournful sighs; and the torrent, dashed from rock to rock, roared with hollow murmur in the abyss below.

All at once I heard—or thought I heard—a dismal moan, as from one in pain. I stopped, held in my breath, turned my ear the way whence proceeded the sound, and, from within a close thicket not thirty yards distant, fancied some one addressed me the following words: "Speed on, Anastasius; thou hast not far to go."

My blood curdled in my veins: a chill of terror, unknown before, crept over my whole frame; I felt an inward shudder,—yet I determined to look bold. But, though I dashed like one delirious among

the rustling bushes, I found no trace of mortal man!

My first attempt was to laugh off the incident. No one joined in my uninfectious mirth; and soon the forced smile died away on my own lips.

Whether, however, the ominous words had actually vibrated on my ears, or had only rung in my heated brain, what did it signify? There needed not an express message from the shades below, to inform me that my company was waited for in other realms; that, with a frame rent at every joint, I was at best but a vampire, only permitted to walk among the living, until the last awful summons should fix it for ever among the vaster myriads already under ground. After a long period of very little change in my bodily state, I had felt my sufferings increase so rapidly since the fatal dream at the first stage from Trieste, that I could almost by the regular and distinct progress of my declension, compute the utmost term I might reach, and the hour at which my last sand must run out, and make me bid this world farewell.

And little—in truth—did I reck my hastened fate. Even in my fullest vigour both of body and of mind, I had often prayed that I might not grow old,—had endeavoured only to crowd events so thickly within the definite span of my existence, that its varied recollections might make my career, however short,

appear longer on retrospect than the longest life of dull undistinguished uniformity.—"Rather,"—had I often exclaimed—"let me even be felled to the ground, while an ample store of verdant boughs may yet grace my prostrate head, than be permitted to wither from old age on my very stalk, unable to offer any attraction or to resent any injury, and indebted, as for an obligation, to those who merely suffer my presence. Let me not outlive all those from whom I might have obtained a passing tear, only to excite derision in those destined to outlive me!"

And now that health and spirits were already drained to the last drop;—now that, cankered by an inward worm, each bough already hung completely faded, and not a single shoot remained fresh and blooming, to cheer by its later spring my own untimely autumn;—now that both what I loved best and what I hated most had already attained the final goal before me,—could I still wish to live—to live alone in the universe, without a spark of affection or even of animosity left glowing in my bosom, to light with its fire my last lingering steps? Could I brook to stand, like the scathed oak in the wilderness, a conspicuous monument of heaven's fiercest wrath?—God forbid!

Then, what was the use of torturing my worn out frame, only to seek far away what I might find so near? I could die any where.

Immediately I formed my resolution. Two stages back I remembered being struck by the appearance of a fir-clothed cottage, close to a country town, whose few inhabitants—kept up somewhat later than usual by some festivity—had attracted my notice by their cheerful clusters. "Might not"—thought I—"that gold, now become so indifferent to its weary possessor, obtain me the loan of this coveted habitation, for the short time my body wanted one above ground?"

This I determined to try: but found obstacles to my scheme even sooner than I had expected. My driver was of the true German breed—an automaton who, throughout the whole length of his stage, could only move according to the impulse given him on setting out. The advantage of receiving full payment for a task only half performed, was what his brain refused to conceive: only, he never had heard of people stopping half way on their journey, to turn back to whence they came; and he never should—God helping—lend his assistance to such an innovation. The cane was shaken in vain at this imperturbable idiot,—even the pistol's threatening muzzle made to exert its dumb oratory close to his ear, without the smallest effect. The immoveable *schwager* would rather be shot dead on the spot, than submit to become instrumental in the nefarious deed of turning his

horses' heads, even to save the weary beasts the toil of half a stage: so that my servant had to pull him at last from off his brother brute, and to usurp his lawful place, ere I could effect my retrograde movement:—nor did I consider this as one of the least achievements of my life.

Equally arduous did I, on my return to L—, find the main business which brought me back. The owners of the cottage—dull plodding people like the postboy—wanted time to consider of my singular proposal. They could not resolve on such a measure in a hurry: and the first determination they were able—after much hesitation—to come to, only consisted in a promise of the habitation at a period so remote, that I must have taken possession of a more lasting mansion long ere it arrived. Even when afterwards the wary couple agreed—on the strength of my ill looks, and hollow cough—to let me have the hovel immediately for the whole term of my life, they still evinced some desire of inserting as a clause in the lease, *when* I was to die. At last, however, through dint of constantly enhancing my offers, every difficulty yielded. I took possession of my cot, and my tenacious landlord went away, half grumbling at his good bargain, half grinning at my strange whim, and wondering at the stranger price I paid for its indulgence.

The last stage of my terrestrial journey thus

achieved, the last place of halting on this side the house to be changed no more, thus occupied, I immediately made the few arrangements necessary for the comfort of my transient abode, and sent for a physician from the neighbouring town, to render my bargain as little losing as possible. On examining my symptoms the sage shook his head, and judiciously observed that I might linger a good while yet, or might die very soon; but would do well, at all events, to follow his prescriptions. His medicine I received, and only took care not to waste the precious compound on my incurable ailments; notwithstanding which cautious conduct my weakness soon increased to such a degree, that a walk round my garden became an exertion.

Near me lived a young couple, whom my other neighbours made the constant theme of their praise:—and most disinterested it seemed; for the husband had only gained, by serving his country as a soldier, some severe and painful wounds, while the wife had lost, by preferring the wounded soldier to a hale peasant with a heavy purse, the countenance of all her kindred. In return she had secured the smiles of a large family of her own, and her only embarrassment was how to give her children bread. Of love alone there remained a most plentiful store: but even of this ingredient it was difficult to say whether, by rendering each consort an object of constant

anxiety to the other, it alleviated their sufferings or increased their solicitude.

To get sight of these worthy people was not so easy as it might seem. They were proud; they liked not a stranger to witness their honourable indigence, and they dreaded the importunate offer of his superfluity. Even when at last—through dint of unabating perseverance—I obtained leave to visit them, they showed the greatest ingenuity in eluding the drift of my visits. With respect to the state of their finances they were downright hypocrites. One would have supposed they wanted for nothing. Fate however ordained me to collect from their own mouths—without any thanks to their candour—the most practicable mode of relieving their necessities.

Once, on a Sunday evening, as the husband, at rest from the week's labour, and with only the weight of his own little wife hanging on his arm, had sat listening across the fence which divided our properties to the narrative of some of my adventures, and had heard with equal awe and concern how the soundest parts of my life had been full of death spots; how pride, passion, love, and hatred—every feeling, every lure, and every stimulus—had in turns swayed my existence, and with such ill-poised force, that each during its reign wholly silenced all the rest, but soon exhausted by indulgence,

again left its rivals to take a dire revenge; how by my own ingenuity I had contrived ever to render useless all the gifts profusely showered upon me; and how finally my whole life had been a struggle with a bounteous Providence, which should do and which undo the most,—the little woman, at the conclusion of the story, fetched a deep sigh, and the husband hereupon giving her a look, she observed with a blush what a pity it was, that a tale so eventful and so strange should remain unrecorded:—Conrad was so good a penman!

At first I spurned the idea. I had indeed learnt a little of the world, and at my cost: but of composition I knew nothing; and though in my flights of buoyancy and conceit I might frequently have planned to gratify the world with my motley memoirs,—though I had already at various periods achieved them in part,—in my days of humiliation and weakness I recoiled from the idea of disclosing the flippant narrative begun, and from the arduous task of ending the dismal tale. That very weakness, however, which oppressed, at last persuaded me. I was no longer able to take any exercise, and I wanted some occupation sufficiently interesting to prevent a still restless mind from preying upon a feeble and failing body. Besides—I own that I felt a faint wish not to let oblivion wholly blot out of man's remembrance the name of Anastasius.

Nor could the scheme encounter great difficulty on the score of the difference of idiom between me and my destined secretary: for Conrad, a gentleman by education as well as by birth, had moreover acquired in his campaigns a sufficient knowledge of the French language—our thus far ordinary medium of communication—to write in it correctly what I should dictate.

If therefore I still only caught at the proposal slowly; if I still awhile made a show of outward reluctance, after I had inwardly given my assent, it was only to obtain on my own terms the assistance proffered,—and to extort a right to estimate, at least in some degree, my obligations to my scribe as merchants do the services rendered by their correspondents: a proceeding which was however at first so haughtily rejected, that I must have despaired of success, but for the soft whisperings of pity in the bosom of my new friends. They saw my frame waste away so fast, that at last they blushed to let an unseasonable—I may say an unsympathizing—delicacy any longer deprive my few remaining days of their only solace; and permitted me to name them in my will. This I eagerly did, and then committed to their care my person and my fame. No sooner was the bargain thus struck, than we sat down. I dictated,—more or less at a time, according to my strength and spirits,—Conrad

wrote: and this is the fruit. If its flavour should be deemed to have a strange mixture of the sweet and the bitter, let it be remembered that sorrow has its smile, as joy has its tear.

Upon the whole the task has afforded me a salutary relief from the tedium of my constrained situation. Only when I have happened, during the ruminations of my mind, to cast my eyes upon my honoured scribe—who sits there smiling to be thus himself unexpectedly brought forward, while waiting with uplifted pen a fresh supply of sentences —and have chanced to catch the stolen glances of affection exchanged between him and his amiable helpmate, plying her needle by his side, some drops of bitterness would mix even with this last pleasure. "Such," thought I, "might have been my own fate with my Euphrosyne; and such also . . . . . .," but already Conrad's incipient frown checks my digressing any further.

Once or twice, indeed, increasing weakness has been near putting a stop to my work, in the midst of its progress. Each time, however, the performance was, after a short interruption, again duly resumed;—and Heaven has at last permitted its completion.

At thirty-five I here dictate its last page and sentence. At thirty-five I take leave of all further earthly concerns: at thirty-five I close,—never more

to re-open it—the crowded volume of my toilsome life. In a few weeks, days—perhaps hours—will for ever drop over my person, my actions, and my errors, the dark curtain of death;—when nothing will remain of the once vain and haughty Anastasius, but an empty name, and a heap of noisome ashes.

O ye who tread their scattered remnants!—ere you execrate that name, the theme of so much obloquy, remember my sufferings: be merciful to my memory,—and may Heaven's mercy rest upon yourselves!

Here ends the author's own narrative: what follows has been added from the account of the gentleman he names Conrad.

Anastasius, having completed the last pages of his memoirs with great effort only, fell, almost immediately after, into an irremediable languor. Every day that dawned now threatened—or rather promised—to be his last: for his existence was become so full of misery, that his end seemed desirable. Yet could not his sufferings—intense as they were—for a moment subdue his fortitude. Never was he heard to utter a syllable of impatience or complaint. Whenever his debility permitted him to converse, the theme was his adored child. "Were my heart opened"—said he one day—

"you would find his name inscribed in its core. In the winning of my Alexis I lost health and strength, but it was the losing of him which gave me the death blow. Now that nothing more remains for me to do but to prepare for my exit, I could have wished—had I been a great man, enabled to indulge all his fancies—to be carried to the spot where he lies, there to breathe my last by his beloved side: but such luxuries an outcast, a homeless wanderer must not think of. Enough for me, when my hour is at hand, to have in his gentle spirit an angel on high, to intercede with his father in Heaven for his expiring earthly parent."

The third morning after this speech, Conrad, coming in at an early hour, found not his patient, as usual, on his pillow. Anastasius had made shift to creep out of bed, and was kneeling before a chair on which rested his face. At first he seemed in a swoon,—but, discerning the approach of his friend, he held out his wasted hand to him, and, trying to raise his head, faintly cried out: "Heaven takes pity at last. Thanks, O thanks for all your goodness!"—and immediately relapsed. After a second interval of apparent mental absence a second fit of momentary consciousness followed, when Conrad, stooping, heard the poor sufferer utter, but in a voice almost extinct: "O my Alexis, I come!" and immediately saw his head fall forward again. Conrad now tried to lift him into bed, in order

that he might be more at ease. There was no occasion: Anastasius was no more.

His body, laid out—by those who owed to him their restoration to comfort and affluence—in a sort of state, was by them committed to its last mansion with somewhat more solemnity than he had desired. They inherited half his property: the other half had been bequeathed to the poor of the place; and, though stanch Roman Catholics, its inhabitants—it is said—still bless the memory of the young Greek.

NOTES.

CHAPTER I.

Note

1\. p. 5. *Confiscation of the paternal estate.* Those who accept offices and titles from the Sultan are considered as submitting to become his slaves, and to give him an arbitrary right over their lives and inheritance.

2\. p. 6. *Bergamo:* the ancient Pergamus.

3\. p. 10. *Its immense cemeteries.* Among the Turks, in proportion as death extends its conquests, cemeteries are enlarged; and the cypress-trees planted round the tombs often give them the appearance of a forest. The burying-places near Scutari are immense; from the predilection which even the Turks of Europe preserve for being buried in Asia.

4\. p. 12. *New flower-beds of graves.* The Turks frequently plant flowers on their tombs, which are open at the top for that purpose.

5\. p. 13. *Sultan Mahmoud's horse:* actually interred in the cemetery of Scutari, under a dome supported by eight pillars.

6\. p. 17. *Shah-nishin:* name given to the projecting windows or gazebos in use at Constantinople.

Note

7. p. 20. *Halabeen:* from Haleb or Aleppo.

CHAPTER II.

1. p. 42. *Mangal:* Turkish brasier.
2. p. 44. *St. Mark's dazzling images:* Venetian sequins, stamped with the figure of that saint, and the most current gold coin in the Levant.
3. p. 51. *Haick:* cotton cloak, worn by the Barbaresques.

CHAPTER IV.

1. p. 106. *Coordish horsemen:* the Coords, or inhabitants of Coordistan, lead, like the Tartars, a pastoral and predatory life; and roam all over Asia Minor, for the purposes of pasture and of plunder.
2. p. 107. *Ansariehs:* a tribe supposed to worship the evil spirit, and, unlike the Mohammedans, by no means tenacious of the chastity of their wives and daughters.
3. p. 111. *Kafflé:* small caravan.
4. p. 115. *Yulfa:* a suburb of Ispahan.

CHAPTER V.

1. p. 136. *Bairak:* Turkish standard, or regiment.
2. p. 139. This rhapsody seems to allude to the seat of the Persian empire having been successively transferred from Ispahan to Sheeraz, and from Sheeraz to Teheran.

Note

2. p. 141. *Serdar:* reception room.

3. p. 145. *Ishallah:* please God!

CHAPTER VI.

1. p. 151. *Kabilé:* small Arab tribe, subordinate to a larger.

CHAPTER VIII.

1. p. 212. *Within three or four Conacks:* or days journey.

2. p. 213. *To untie my horse's legs.* The Arab mode of securing horses during the night consists in tying their legs to a stake driven in the ground.

CHAPTER IX.

1. p. 241. *Turkish santon:* or itinerant saint; of the sort that travel about, living upon the credulity and superstition of the lower orders.

CHAPTER X.

1. p. 244. *He soon distinguished himself by his proficiency in magic:*—an art believed in by all the mamlukes, and cultivated by many.

2. p. 254. Sir Sydney Smith, in his despatches to government, calls Djezzar Pasha (whom we had the honour of supporting at the

Note

expense of British blood and treasure, as well as the Beys of Egypt), the *energetic* old man.

3. p. 268. *Tekkieh:* monastery or building in which the derwishes perform their devout exercises.

CHAPTER XI.

1. p. 269. *Kaflé:* vide supra, p. 436.
2. p. 269. *Imam:* priest.
3. p. 271. *Cazi-asker:* chief of the order of Turkish magistrates, of which there are two; one for Roumili and one for Anadoly.
4. p. 271. *Medressé:* Mohammedan endowed college.
5. p. 271. *Khodgea:* teacher, preceptor.
6. p. 271. *Muderrees:* members of the higher departments of the law.
7. p. 274. *Antakieh:* the ancient Antioch.
8. p. 276. *Leaden images:* of their saints, which some of the orders of derwishes distribute.
9. p. 278. *Hadjee-Becktash:* the patron saint of one of the principal orders of derwishes.
10. p. 281. *My shaggy hair:* some derwishes deviate from the custom of the Turks, in wearing their hair very long.
11. p. 281. *Disturbed all the angels in my beard:* the Mohammedans, from some such prejudice, deem it a sin, after once they have suffered their beards to grow, to cut them off again.

Note

12. p. 284. *Donanmas:* Fêtes given by the Turkish government on the occasion of public rejoicings, &c.

CHAPTER XIV.

1. p. 364. *Vulgar name:* prepared skin, called in French *peau d'âne.*

2. p. 374. *Its seals are all torn off, and its ornaments effaced:* by the treaty of Tolentino, concluded between the Pope and Bonaparte, the fairest provinces of the Patrimony of St. Peter, and the finest statues of the Vatican, had been ceded to the French.

N. B. It should be observed throughout this work, that, as scarcely two European nations pronounce the vowels alike in their own languages, and as in different parts of the East very different vowels are inserted between the consonants in the same words and names, their uncertain sounds seldom are the same in different writers. I have endeavoured as much as possible to adapt my spelling to the sound of the different letters in English.

THE END.